DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 148 702 SO 010 606

AUTHOR Ball, Geraldine
TITLE Human Development Program: Level V Activity Guide.
INSTITUTION Human Development Training Inst., San Diego, Calif.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 173p.; For related documents, see SO 010 598-607
AVAILABLE FROM Human Development Training Institute, 7574 University Avenue, La Mesa, California 92041 ($9.95, paperbound)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Affective Objectives; Attitudes; Behavioral Objectives; *Child Development; Child Psychology; Curriculum Guides; Discussion Groups; Elementary Education; Emotional Development; Grade 5; *Humanistic Education; *Interpersonal Competence; Learning Activities; Listening Groups; Mental Health Programs; Modeling (Psychological); Motivation Techniques; Skill Development; Social Relations; Teacher Role; *Teaching Techniques
IDENTIFIERS *Human Development Program; Magic Circle

ABSTRACT

The curriculum guide presents the activities component of the Human Development Program for grade 5. The Human Development Program (HDP) is an affective curricular approach developed by psychologists to help teachers instill responsibility and self-confidence in children. The activity guide presents topics and directions for 180 sequential Human Development Sessions in which teachers and students sit in a circle (called a Magic Circle) for 20 minutes each day to talk about feelings. Topics are based upon awareness, self-confidence, and social interaction. The major objectives are to encourage children to show acceptance of themselves and others, and to listen to and focus upon the feelings of others. Fifth grade activities stress self-reliance, flexible attitudes and behavior, trusting relationships, sense of personal identity, and awareness of the complexities of social situations. Topics include having many kinds of self-control, knowing how to get attention, doing what I am supposed to do, feeling like saying something but keeping it to myself, and pretending I am listening when I am not. The guide presents information to teachers on how to prepare the Magic Circle session, explain the topic for discussion, lead the daily session, encourage children to volunteer to lead a session, and help the children review, summarize, and evaluate what they learned. (Author/DB)

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Uvaldo Palomares, Ed.D. and Geraldine Ball, M.S.

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Level V
Activity Guide

by

Geraldine Ball

SP 010 606

Published by
Human Development Training Institute, Inc.
7574 University Ave., La Mesa, CA 92041

Cover Art by Anne Woodson,
a fifth grader in Room B8
Phoebe Hearst Elementary School
San Diego City Schools
1973-'74

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PREFACE

This Level V Human Development Program Activity Guide has been written and published for the use of fifth grade teachers by the Human Development Training Institute (HDTI). It is one of a set of activity guides for teachers who are interested in offering the Human Development Program, an affective educational curriculum, to the children in their classes. This guide may also be used by other group leaders, such as Girl Scout and Boy Scout leaders, Religious Education teachers, Boy's and Girl's Club Counselors, and parents, to name a few, who work and/or live with children from nine to eleven years of age. Activity Guides for other grade levels, as well as theoretical, supplemental and evaluative materials in the Human Development Program are also available from HDTI.

Each Human Development Program Activity Guide has been written with the idea in mind that many of the things that we have learned in Psychology and Educational Philosophy about the needs of human beings can be brought into the classroom (or community center, church, home, etc.) via a practical, workable tool — the Human Development Program circle session or "Magic Circle". As these materials were created they were carefully researched and field-tested with children in order to see what is meaningful and useful to them. Suggestions for ways to carry out each session, and culminating questions to ask at the end of the session are included with each topic that is presented. Suggested procedures for instituting the program and things to keep in mind as you select topics and lead the circle sessions are also presented, as are a number of synthesizing supplementary activities in a variety of subject areas.

Before embarking on the Human Development Program it is highly recommended that you read the *Methods in Human Development, Theory Manual.* Prior experience with positive affective techniques would be helpful in carrying out the program, and specific training in the Human Development Program would be even more helpful. These workshops may be arranged on a district basis by contacting the Human Development Training Institute.

We, at HDTI welcome information from you regarding the training you receive, the usefulness of the Activity Guides, ideas you have generated in the affective realm, and any other feedback or innovations that you may wish to share which will help us to continue to upgrade the program and the training workshops.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to convey my deepest and warmest thanks to:

ALAN BALL, my husband, whose love and belief in me has helped me to love and believe in myself,

DR. UVALDO HILL PALOMARES, for playing a key role in developing our ideas and for effectively carrying the message to so many people,

DR. HAROLD BESSELL, for feeling the need for a preventive approach to emotional and social problems we humans face *and for acting on it*, (and for some of the points on effective leadership and some of the topics from the prior Activity Guides which have been revised for Level V),

HARVEY JACKINS, founder of Re-Evaluation Counseling and author of *The Human Side of Human Beings*, for sharing his ideas about people, which have enhanced my life and influenced the writing of this book.

DR. LUCILLE and DR. JIM McCAMEY, my dear friends, who have taught me so much,

MRS. BEVERLY RICHMOND and her fifth graders, Hearst School, San Diego City Schools, San Diego, California, 1973-74, for their enthusiastic response to my constant visits,

JEAN MESTLER, CLINT MALLERY, KATE FREY, BETH BLAKEMORE and BILL CAÑEDO, and the children in their classes at Logan Elementary School, San Diego City Schools, San Diego, California, 1973-74 for field testing these materials with fifth graders (Mrs. Frey's class), sixth graders (Mr. Mallery's class), educationally handicapped fifth and sixth graders (Ms. Blakemore's class) and fifth and sixth graders in a bilingual/bicultural class (Mr. Cañedo's class). (Ms. Mestler also field-tested the materials with all four groups of children and coordinated the total effort.),

DON GROVES, JEAN JACOBSON, KAREN JOHNSON, JIM KEELER, GERALD HERBERT, and KAREN BARTELS, of the Aurora Public Schools, Aurora, Colorado, for their work in developing topics and supplementary activities in the areas of decision-making and critical thinking, dealing with peer pressures, focusing on listening skills and developing awareness of self and group identity,

MY COLLEAGUES, who shared the knowledge with me that they have gained in working with the Human Development Program, particularly John and Micaela Jensen, Leif Fearn, Terri Rubini, Monroe K. Rowland, Miguel Trujillo, Jack Langdon, Merle Cummins, who contributed "A Guide for the Leader for Analyzing the Session," and Jim Ballard, who contributed to "The Two Most Important Things to Remember" and "Strategies for the Involvement of Everyone, Part I",

THE TEACHERS, the critical link between these printed pages and the children, for being open and receptive to the Human Development Program and for so generously providing me with information that has led to revision and upgrading of the program,

AND MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, THE CHILDREN, for responding so beautifully. When I'm in a circle with you, I know I'm on the right track.

Geraldine Ball

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INTRODUCTION

THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM . . .

is a curricular approach which is designed to give children the opportunity to become constructively involved in developing their own personal effectiveness, self-confidence, and understanding of the causes and effects in interpersonal relationships. It is a *preventive* program, designed to help children understand and respect themselves and each other as human beings. By becoming involved in the program they are given an opportunity to learn useful social skills in order to *prevent* problems that many people struggle with because they did not have the opportunity early enough to learn some important things about themselves and about other people. The program capitalizes on the basic drives of children to achieve mastery and gain approval.

The program *systematically* incorporates what master teachers do every day to instill responsibility and self-confidence in children. It is an eclectic developmental and sequential plan, (never coercive, or confrontive) which reduces the chance factor for emotional and social growth in the affective domain. The scope and sequence of the activities provide experiences that develop knowledge and skills needed for effective personal adjustment, ability to communicate with others, success in academic endeavors, and other life challenges.

A number of values and assumptions are basic to the Human Development Program. Among them are:

1. The inherent worth of every human individual.

2. The right of each person to be self-determining.

3. The right (as well as the need) of each person to acceptance and affection.

If we believe that every human being is worthwhile, our interactions with others will reflect this attitude. We will *never* see anyone as being inherently unimportant, worthless, or "bad," although some behaviors may understandably be given these labels. The structure of the Human Development Program reflects the belief that all human beings are valuable on an equal basis. In its content, the program frequently relates to the dichotomy of the person, as one entity, and the person's behavior, as another entity. It is emphasized throughout the program that, while each person is innately worthwhile, our behavior speaks for us, or represents us, to others. The ways in which we behave affect our own lives and the lives of other people.

If every person has the right to self determination, the implication to us, as teachers, is that we have a responsibility to make possibilities for expression and actualization known to children, and then to facilitate their progress as they move toward the goals *that they choose*. In a number of ways participation in the Human Development Program itself is a self-determining situation for each child. The child decides for him/herself how, and to what extent, he/she will become involved in each session. The issue of self determination is also addressed throughout the program. This is done by giving the children the opportunity to become aware of how such imposed determining forces as stereotyping work. The children are also given frequent opportunities to become more aware of their own positive qualities, such as their abilities, strengths, and how they have been effective in overcoming obstacles that they have faced.

If every person has the right to receive acceptance and affection, this implies that we need to *listen* to children when they express their feelings and ideas. We can also find ways to help them learn to do this for each other. When genuine acceptance is given and received, affection is free to grow. The format of the Human Development Program consistently provides a framework for realizing this ideal.

The program is based on the theoretical assumption that a key avenue to maintaining and enhancing mental health and well-being is through the process of verbal interaction. With our complex emotional and intellectual lives, it would be devastating to us if we could not talk about our experiences with each other. When we do share our experiences and our feelings at a level beyond superficiality, we come to realize that all of us experience all of the emotions, but that each of us experiences the emotions in his/her own unique way. This is because different things happen to us.

Every situation in life is different from every other, as all humans are different. By sharing our experiences, and the feelings that go with them, we are enabled to see the basic commonalities among human beings and the individual differences too.

It is another assumption of the program that understanding the foregoing, leads to self understanding and self respect. On this foundation we then grow to understand and respect others and in the process we develop the concern for humanity that is necessary for us to have if we are going to become responsible members of the human family.

THE CIRCLE SESSION . . .

or "Magic Circle" is the nucleus of the Human Development Program. It is a carefully articulated communications system which encourages spontaneous individual expression. In the classroom circle session, the children and their teacher share their feelings and thoughts, and discuss their behavior, daily through verbal group interaction in activities (or sessions) related to emotional and social development. Throughout the twenty to thirty minute session, an atmosphere of acceptance prevails. Children are encouraged to share their feelings genuinely and to learn to listen and give attention to each other.

The role of the teacher (or leader) is to begin the activity by explaining the topic for discussion and to take a turn relating to the topic, perhaps by going first, if necessary. After each child who wishes to speak has had an opportunity, the leader of the session helps the children to review and summarize what was learned in the session. Progressively, the teacher (or leader) says less in each session — giving more of the responsibility to the children as they are ready to assume it. Child leadership training begins when the children are ready to take responsibility for leading their own circle sessions. Their leadership is then gradually expanded as the program progresses.

THE DESIGN OF THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM . . .

is semi-structural, flexible and open-ended. It is a developmental curriculum in the area of affective education. The experiences in each unit prepare children to move into each sequential unit progressively. The program is much like a developmental reading program, in that the skills learned at one level form the foundation for growth in the next. (See the Human Development Program Overview Chart, pages 3 and 4 for information relating to levels, group arrangements, strategies and objectives, grades pre-school through six.)

The program has been designed to begin with four year olds, but it may be inaugurated at any grade level. Currently available are the *Pre-school and Kindergarten Activity Guide*, and *Levels I, II, III, IV, V and VI*, corresponding to their respective grade levels. *The Human Development Program for Institutionalized Teenagers*, appropriate for all teenage groups, those in correctional institutions in particular, is also available, as are theoretical, supplemental and evaluative materials relating to the program.

Other materials are in the developmental stages. These include: *Human Development Program for Junior High and Senior High School Groups, for The Prevention and Treatment of Drug Abuse*, and *For Career Education*. These materials are presently being researched and developed and will be available at a later date.

Inquiries regarding the program materials and training workshops may be directed to:

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TRAINING INSTITUTE
7574 University Avenue
La Mesa, California 92041

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Due to the ever-increasing, positive trend toward parental and community involvement, teachers and school administrators are urged to inform the community of the objectives and format of the program as it is instituted in the school, or, better yet, prior to its institution. Invitations to parents and community members should be extended so that they might hear about the program and see it in action, first hand. If it is feasible, carry out circle sessions in which the parents and interested members of the community are participants. This has been done in a number of schools with success and is recommended. Awareness topics presented in the first unit of this activity guide are generally well suited for this kind of demonstration.

ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR LEVEL V

This guide contains directions for 174 Human Development Circle Sessions for the classroom, or other setting. Each circle session topic, or activity, constitutes one segment of a unit, which has a theme, such as *Identity*, or *Endeavors*. Each unit relates to one of the following three major areas of personal development of the program: Awareness, Mastery (or self-confidence) and Social Interaction.

Sample circle session topics at Level V are:

> "My Favorite Place," from an Awareness unit, entitled *Positive Feelings, Thoughts and Behavior* (*Page 39*).
>
> *"Someone Who Trusts Me,"* from a Social Interaction unit, entitled *Building Trust* (Page 56).
>
> "Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Enjoyable," from a Mastery unit, entitled, *Learning* (*Page 67*).

Although a number of the activities address complex issues, they are written in an elementary form so that child leaders as well as teachers, may be able to read and understand them.

USE OF THE TOPICS . . .

Most of the activities — perhaps all of them — will be very appropriate for your group though some may not. As groups differ widely, you may find it necessary to be selective in your use of the activities or use them in an order which you deem more appropriate for your group, than the order in which they are presented in this guide.

Generally speaking, the units are more interchangeable with respect to sequence than are the topics within each unit. Elementary topics are presented at the beginning of each unit. At times, the intent of these activities is to request an opinion, rather than a personal feeling from the children. Gradually, the topics stimulate more personal (but never intimate) responses. Topics which elicit discussion of negative feelings are not presented until positive ones in the same subject areas have preceded them. Topics at or near the end of each unit are the most advanced and complex.

If you feel the need to delete topics from any given unit, it is recommended that the ones deleted be consecutive ones at the beginning of the unit (if you feel that the children are in need of more advanced topics), or that they be consecutive ones at the end of the unit (if you feel that the children would profit more from topics which are generally more basic). In other words, it would be best to take topics in sequential blocks, rather than deleting them from any given unit irregularly. Often two or more consecutive topics are very closely tied together and should be presented one immediately after the other.

There are exceptions to this rule. Sometimes it is difficult on a Monday, or the first day everyone is back from a vacation, to discuss the topic which would be the next one in the unit sequence with which you are working. Other times during sequential meetings in the week you may sense the group's need for a "lighter" topic before proceeding with the rest of the unit. In these cases, reintroduce a topic from the first Awareness unit. Or, turn to Appendix A and introduce one of the "warm fuzzy" topics, which you will find there.

Decisions regarding choice of topics should also be made with consideration of your own needs. If you would be uncomfortable leading a session with a particular topic, it might be best not to do it. Your discomfort might be communicated to the children and possibly confuse them. On the other hand, a number of teachers have reported that they have received some important insights and unexpected good feelings from sessions that they held with the children when the topic was one which seemed nebulous at first, or in some way disagreeable, or difficult to carry out.

Once you and the children have learned how a circle session works, you, or the children, may think of unique topics which meet your own particular needs. Two cautions in this regard are: (1) Topics should not become lead-ins for "ax-grinding," and (2) A topic should relate to the affective

realm. As one HDP consultant once put it: *"If it 'ain't' about feelings, it 'ain't' a Human Development Program circle session."*

If you are a beginner with the program and you do not feel the need to make adjustments, it is recommended that you follow the guide closely with respect to sequence.

THE SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES . . .

At the end of each unit, a number of activities relating to the unit theme are presented. These activities have been developed to supplement and enlarge upon what is being learned in the circle sessions and relate to improving communications and relationships among the children. They include experiences in a variety of subject areas and should not be used as substitutes for circle sessions.

Use these activities and/or devise others for all of the subject areas that you teach. A way to achieve confluence, a blend between the affective and cognitive domains, in your teaching is to (1) institute programs that are primarily affective in nature, such as the Human Development Program to compliment the instructional program, and (2) to find the affective components in the cognitive lessons that you are teaching and focus the attention of the children on them. For example, as the class becomes involved in discussing current events, ask them to consider the ways that the people in the news may have felt as the events occurred and how they feel right now as they look back in retrospect at the event. The feelings of scientists as they tediously work in their laboratories to find serums for diseases, the feelings of the Indians and the Pilgrims when they first met each other, and the feelings of the children themselves as they divide fractions, are all fruitful items for oral discussion, written stories and essays, art, dramas, and the like, which will connect the cognitive and affective realms. It is this kind of an approach that makes learning meaningful and relevant.

Overview Chart

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Levels, Group Arrangements, Strategies, and Objectives
Grades Pre-School through Six

Level	Grade	Age	Groupings	Strategies	Objectives
Pre-School		4-5	Single Circle 5-10	Encouragement to talk, listen, succeed.	Improve self-control and ability to listen and express; develop self-confidence and understanding of interpersonal interaction. Tolerance for individual differences. Understanding of universalization principle — emphasis on common human traits. Increase self-acceptance and listening skills. Begin coping with mixed feelings.
Kindergarten		5-6	Single Circle 8-10	As above. Deal with negative as well as positive topics.	
I	First	6-7	First one circle 8-12; then add self-controlled children to outer ring until whole class is in two concentric rings. Teacher and child leaders alternate.	As above. Discuss 1) ambivalence in feelings, thoughts, behaving, 2) effective and ineffective behavior, 3) reality and fantasy. Discuss variables of inclusion, exclusion, warmth, coldness, making of decisions. Begin leadership experiences.	As above. Effective self-control, ability to comfortably experience ambivalence, improve reality testing, self-confidence, effective meeting of needs, increase responsibility, tolerance, empathy, skill in making helpful suggestions. Sharing in decision making and recognition of leadership abilities.
II	Second	7-8	As above.	As above. Continued presentation of methods of awareness, coping, social interaction. Character development is fostered by challenge, commitment, and direct interpersonal communication with peers. Continued decision-making and child leadership.	As above. Articulation of wide range of experiences in positive and negative feelings, thoughts, and behavior. Self-confidence and positive self-concept. Ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy. Motivation to be responsible, productive, kind. Share in decision-making. Leadership as service, not exploitation. Ability to make helpful suggestions to guide leaders to better functioning.

Overview Chart
(Continued)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Levels, Group Arrangements, Strategies, and Objectives
Grades Pre-School through Six

Level	Grade	Age	Groupings	Strategies	Objectives
III	Third	8-9	As above.	As above. Further challenge to self-sufficiency, integration, honesty. Emphasize responsibility in social interaction, keeping commitments.	As above. Self-control as a matter of personal pride. Verbal facility, skillful and tolerant listening. Ability to tolerate ambivalent feelings in self and others. Skill in observing differences between verbalization and performance. Wise decision-making and responsible, constructive leadership. Courage in taking the initiative to build good social relationships.
IV	Fourth	9-10	As above.	As above. Challenge to recognize psychological similarities and differences between the sexes. Role playing. Micro Lab. Experiences with authenticity and duplicity and problem solving. Exploring dreams and practice at problem solving.	As above. Accepting and reflective listening. Deeper self-awareness and understanding of social relationships. Fuller acceptance of responsibility for their own behavior.
V	Fifth	10-11	Three general plans for articulation, presented.	As above. Focus on importance of flexible outlook and behavior. Units no longer assigned to a certain number of days of the week. Supplemental affective activities presented in a variety of subject areas.	As above. Increased understanding of how trusting relationships are developed. Awareness of the complexities in social situations. Development of a sense of identity. Dealing with Role Expectations, such as sex role demands. Increasing awareness of one's own capabilities and likeable qualities.
VI	Sixth	11-12	As above.	As above. Focus on responsibility for one's own behavior. Increased supplemental affective activities presented in a variety of subject areas.	As above. Increased self confidence through validation of self and others. Increased sense of self identity and group dynamics. Exploring conflict resolution. Increased understanding of self-determination, choices and decision-making.

LEADING THE CIRCLE SESSION

The following is a thorough plan for a Human Development Program circle session. It covers the major things to keep in mind and a number of answers to "what if . . . ?" questions. Read it now and re-read it at various intervals as you conduct circle sessions.

All of these occurrences will not happen in any one session. Here, however, is a comprehensive statement about the important things to remember as you conduct these "simple, but not easy" sessions:

STARTING THE SESSION:

You aren't teaching a lesson. You're relating to people. Set a positive atmosphere by warmly drawing everyone into the circle. An attitude of seriousness blended with enthusiasm on your part will let the children know that this is an important part of the day's learning experiences and that it is an activity that can be interesting and meaningful. Establish eye contact with each child. Always use their names as you speak to them. Briefly, but clearly, go over the ground rules, i.e.:

1. Each person may have a turn to speak, if he/she wishes to, taking only his/her fair share of the time.

2. Everyone will *listen* to the person who is speaking, without any interruptions, and will accept the speaker's feelings by not confronting him/her in any way,

3. Each person will stay in his/her own space, and,

4. Destructive behavior such as coercing someone to speak, probing, interpreting, or making "put-down" remarks will not be accepted or allowed to continue. (Put-downs make any group experience unsafe. It doesn't matter who is put down, because any put-down means we are all vulnerable. If someone laughs, all must be able to share the fun or it is unsafe. When silence feels comfortable, it is safe.)

From this point on, demonstrate to the children that you *expect* them to remember and abide by the ground rules. Conveying the feeling to them that you think well of them and that you know that they are fully capable of responsible behavior, will in most cases, bring out the very best in children. Let them know that by coming to a session they are committing themselves to listen during the session and to show acceptance and respect to the other children. Preliminary activities related to communication skills are presented in this guide to aid the children in eliminating non-helpful behaviors in their circle sessions. (See pages 25 to 32).

To get things started, tell the children about the activity. *"I'm going to ask a question only you know the answer to . . ."* Then state the topic. Extend a general invitation: *"Who would like to go first?"* If there are no volunteers, respond to the topic yourself, such as, *"Something that gives me a good feeling is my guitar. I feel good when I play it."* If it is not necessary for you to take your turn first, be sure to do so later.

THE PARTICIPATION PHASE:

Let the children decide individually when they are ready to speak. Ask them to raise their hands so you will know when they are ready. When silences occur, wait patiently. They need time to think about what they are going to say. Others need time to gather courage. After a bit, you might help them to do this by saying, *"Let's all close our eyes and think about . . ."* If more than one child begins to talk at a time, ask all but one to wait and listen. Name the other children and let them know in what order each one will be given their chance to speak. Assure them that everyone will have a turn if they want one. Express your appreciation to those who show that they are willing to wait.

When the children begin to respond, focus your complete attention on the one who is having his/her turn. Take time with the child and accept his/her contribution, even if the child says very little. Ask each one, *"Tell us how you feel about it."* If the children need help, then supply words, e.g., *"Does it give you a good feeling?"* Gradually introduce more "feeling" vocabulary ("pleased", "excited", "proud", etc.) Focus on feelings non-verbally also, with eyes, touch and gesture. (Other questions to ask during the participation phase are also suggested for each activity in this guide.)

Model accepting, rather than judgmental behavior, showing the children that in the circle, each person is respected as his/her unique self. At first they sometimes copy each other, or say what they think you want to hear, probably because they want to be sure that what they say will be accepted. Remember the reason for this behavior. In a general way, assure the group that it is okay for them to tell their real feelings. In time, they will begin to feel safe enough to do so if the atmosphere in the circle is truly an accepting one.

Listening in the circle is essential! It is one of the basic purposes of the program. Make sure that the children understand that listening is expected of everyone. Tell them, *"When you talk, what do you want us to do? What should you remember to do when someone else is talking?"* The most effective way to assure good listening is to model it yourself. Make it obvious that you are listening attentively to each of the children when they speak. Remember what they say and be prepared to repeat it later. Draw the attention of children who do not appear to be listening to the one who is speaking by tactful word or gesture. (In the review phase of the session they will be asked to repeat what others have said.)

Show the children that you want to understand them. If a student says something that you do not understand very well, ask him/her to help you to understand what it was, or ask the other children about it. Then check out their responses with the child who spoke. Give credit to those who understood and listened carefully. In this way, you are making it clear that you do not know everything and that their comments are worthwhile and important.

If some children talk for too long a period of time, it is probably because they feel that now they have the chance and may not get another soon. Remember the reason for the behavior. Help them clarify their thoughts about what they want to talk about — one at a time. Gently guide their attention away from the content of their remarks to their feelings. Without singling him/her out, remind the group, *"Remember, everyone who wants a turn gets one each time we have a circle."* If they can be convinced that it is important that everyone has an opportunity to speak, in time they will help to make sure that everyone does get a turn.

As the activity progresses, concentrate on asking open-ended questions first, as necessary: *"Would you like to tell us more about it, (Shirley)?"* Then ask closed-ended questions. *"How?"* is usually a meaningful question because it can help children to focus their attention on specific behaviors. *"Why?"* is sometimes a meaningful question, but if it comes across as interogative, it can put the children on the defensive. It also has the disadvantage of taking the children away from concentrating on their feelings. Such closed-ended questions as *"when"* and *where"*, and especially *"who"*, should be generally avoided because they almost always relate to non-relevant content. After each child has contributed in the circle, show your appreciation to him/her in your own way. Often a simple nod adequately conveys respect and appreciation.

If, after one or two responses, none of the other children have volunteered, try again with: *"Let's close our eyes and think . . ."* Let them know that you understand: *"Some of us may find it difficult to express our feelings in the circle at first, but after we get used to it, we'll find it easier."* *Do not switch to another topic.* To do so implies that you will not be satisfied until they speak. Changing to another topic tells the children that you really didn't mean it when you said that they didn't have to take a turn if they didn't want to. If only one or two children share and everyone else is given the chance to do likewise, but declines, simply proceed to the review and culmination of the session as you ordinarily would. Thank all of the children for being a part of the circle and end the session. In time, almost all children will contribute verbally when they are assured that there is no pressure on them to do so.

In initial sessions, after two or more have responded, point out similarities and differences: *"Do you see that (Maria) and (Henry) have the same kind of feeling, and (Lowell's) is different?"* Make it clear by tone, look, etc., that both similarities and differences are natural, neutral, and acceptable.

Point out important positive interactions between the children such as when the same and different feelings are noticed: *"You smiled when he said that. Have you had the same feeling?"* Also point out the observable ways people handle their feelings: *"When you have a good feeling, you sit up straight and smile and I can see your feelings all the way over here!"* Allow them to interact with each other directly. If they have questions for each other allow them to ask them briefly, as time permits. If they direct the question to you, ask them to redirect it to the individual who can answer it.

Do not allow anyone to probe, or interpret, however.

First efforts to speak will often be irrelevant, silly, etc. In the beginning, it is more important to get the students to speak to each other about their feelings than it is to be "right on" the topic. Whatever children say, respect it and go along with it, even when they bring up something that they feel bad about when the topic is "Feeling Good". (The only exception would be when a child interrupts or says something destructive to another group member, which should not be considered acceptable.) Gently guide the conversation back to the subject, after the child's statements have been accepted. Deal with negative topics, such as "Something That Made Me Feel Bad," in the same matter-of-fact way that you would with positive topics. Remain neutral and accepting and be sure not to moralize.

As you begin conducting circle sessions, urge the students to "be themselves" in the circle and to relate personally to one another but not to tell intimate details of their lives. We are interested in each other's personal feelings and ideas, but not information about each other's homes or families that "are none of our business". To explain further, you may suggest that they talk about themselves and keep from telling names of other people. Ask them to share things that wouldn't embarrass them, or anyone else. Explain also that when someone shares their feelings in the circle, the things they tell about should not be brought up again at some later time by anyone except that person. The things that are shared still "belong" to each person who shared them. Each person should be treated with respect both in and out of the circle.

No one should be forced or coerced to talk in the circle if they do not wish to. However, sometimes children do wish very much to participate, but are fearful. They may benefit from your encouragement. If they seem ready to speak, you may gently invite them to do so. If you sense that it will be appropriate, elicit the help of a more secure child to encourage the one who is reticent, by asking questions that will help to clarify the reticent one's thoughts and feelings. Then give credit to both. Children who do not participate verbally at first, will, when they are ready. In the meantime, they are listening and learning.

Sometimes such physical discharge reactions as laughter or yawning may occur in the children. These, being normal releases of tension, should be accepted as are the feelings a child expresses. Sometimes, children cry at school. Remember that the crying, too, is a discharge of hurt or tension. Allow the children their rights to these releases, and give them free, warm attention when they occur.

The circle is an accepting environment, but destructive behavior, such as ridicule, or overt disruption, should not be accepted or allowed to continue. Children should view their participation in the circle as a privilege to be appreciated and utilized. Deal with the needs of disrupters, but keep the focus on the individual who is having his/her turn. If you get maneuvered into dealing with negative attention-getting, the group may decide that that's how to get attention. Try to deal with the disrupter's feelings non-verbally. Touch them lightly on the knee or have them exchange chairs to sit by you, giving as little attention to them in the process as possible. If these measures aren't helpful, it might be a good idea to allow them to hear how you and their peers feel about their actions. If this technique has no immediate effect, ask disrupters to leave the circle, reminding them that their presence is desired, but that their disruptive behavior will not be accepted. At another time have a private talk with children who disrupt. Make sure that they understand that they may be members of the circle when they abide by the ground rules.

The most important thing to remember in this regard is to avoid these kinds of problems in the first place. If your attitude conveys that the circle session is a special time and if you carefully go over the ground rules with the children at first, and again at appropriate intervals, these problems are often prevented. When a child begins to be disruptive, wait until he/she does do something appropriate, such as taking a turn to speak and contributing his/her feelings, or correctly reflecting back to someone in the review what they said, then praise him/her for that positive action. Show him/her that certain actions will receive attention and appreciation.

As the students become comfortable in the session and accustomed to the format, you will be able to sense this and "move back" to let them respond more readily to one another, and to you when it's your turn to speak. Take over the activity only when it is necessary to make sure everyone who wants a turn gets it, to guide reflective listening in the review phase, or to keep the interaction positive. Child leadership training may be begun at this time and even expanded after the training stage. The procedures to follow for instituting child leadership appear on pages 20 to 24.

REVIEWING:

Once or twice during the session, review what has thus far been shared by each child who has spoken by asking the children, *"Who will tell (Sally) the main part of what she said and what her feelings were."* As the children repeat what was said, ask them to personally address the one who said it, *"You told about . . . and you felt . . ."* Reward good listening with such praising commentary as, *"You listened well, (Pedro). You can remember what you hear too."* This is a good way to bring in students who have not spoken to the topic. Reviewing need not be done in the same order in which the children contributed, and may be held off altogether until the end of the session when everyone who wishes to speak has done so.

CULMINATING:

Cognitively review each session at its conclusion. Ask such questions as: *"Who thinks they can say why we talk about these things? Does it give you a good feeling to know more about other people? What was this all about? What did we learn (about each other)? How do you feel about it?"* Other questions pertaining to each activity are presented in this guide. Culminating questions set the stage for more willing participation in future sessions by letting the children understand that we are "learning some important things." Our purpose is to bring this affective experience together with its accompanying cognitive lessons.

If the questions that are suggested in the guide do not seem appropriate for what transpired in any given session, formulate one or two questions in your own mind and ask them, or ask the children if they have questions in mind to ask the group, which relate to what the session has been about.

Always accept the answers the children give to the questions, just as you do the feelings they tell about in the session, even if the answers are not "correct" to your way of thinking. Never ask a question and then answer it yourself, even if no one speaks up. The main purpose is to cause each child to think over the question, not answer it quickly and forget it. At times, however, very meaningful discussions will come about when the group becomes stimulated by one of the questions. This, of course, should be encouraged as time permits, and will probably occur more frequently as the children become more involved in the program.

It is hard for many of us to keep from answering the questions ourselves in one way or another, but it helps to remember that children generally "turn-off" to adults when we moralize to them, or tell them how to feel, or what to think. They will have their own feelings and come to their own conclusions, anyway. By using the program, we are trying to bring about a safe environment in which children reach rational conclusions *that are their own*. They will, therefore, be far more committed to these conclusions, than to ideas we try to implant in them. For this reason, we must respect the rate at which the children are able to do this.

ANNOUNCING TOMORROW'S TOPIC:

Before the children leave the circle, tell them what topic you have in mind for the next day so that they will be able to think about it. A pocket chart, showing the sequence of topics to be discussed, may be posted on a bulletin board in the classroom.

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

No matter what happens in a circle session, without the following two elements, it is really not a Human Development circle session:

1. Everyone gets a turn who wants one.

2. Everyone who takes a turn gets listened to.

What does it mean to get a turn? Imagine a pie divided into as many pieces as there are people in the circle. Telling the children that everyone will get a turn, whether they want to take it or not is like telling them that each one will get a piece of pie. Some may not want their piece today, but they

know it's there to take if and when they want it. As the leader, you are there to protect this right. Thus, getting a turn not only means a chance to talk, but also an assurance to the child that he/she has "space" that no one else will violate.

When the children take their turns, they will be listened to. There will be no attempt by anyone to manipulate what they are offering. That is, they will not be probed, interrupted, interpreted, analyzed, put-down, joked-at, advised, preached to and so on. To "listen to" in the Human Development Program is to respectfully focus attention on the speaker and to let him/her know that you heard what he/she said. This is done in the review phase of each circle session. For this reason, each session is *not complete* without a review of what each person who spoke to the topic said.

The lowest risk method for giving someone the feeling that you heard what they said seems to be to "feed-back", "reflect", "parrot" or *"mirror" the speaker's own words.* By repeating back certain words that the speaker used that appear to have special meaning to him/her, the speaker *knows* that he/she was listened to. An alternate method for reflecting is to use paraphrasing, (repeating back synonomous words) in which the listener uses his/her own words to convey to the speaker what he/she thought the speaker was saying. As you model these skills in the circle sessions, the children will learn them through imitation.

The only way that a circle session can be evaluated is by these two criteria. Thus, if only one or two students chose to speak, and were listened to, by way of a review, even if they didn't say very "deep" or "meaningful" things, the circle can be considered a success.

Remember also that everyone who leads circle sessions has his/her own personal style. There is no one perfect way to do it. You will develop your own style as you work with the program. Think of yourself as a novice for the first year. Human Development circle sessions are challenging. They require energy and practice but like almost everything that takes hard work, they bring great rewards.

A GUIDE FOR THE LEADER FOR ANALYZING THE SESSION

It is sometimes very difficult to evaluate just what has happened in a session. How well did it go? Were the needs of the group met? Are there things I could do better?

If I am to be open and honest with others, first I must be open and honest with myself. This is a slow, never ending process, which grows and blossoms with tender care. It takes courage and patience but the rewards of knowing are worth it.

The first place to search for answers is within yourself. At the end of a session a careful analysis of your feelings may reveal some answers as to why some things work and why some other things don't. People are open as long as they feel safe. Carefully give thought to each item on this list:

1. Did everyone have a turn?
2. Was someone especially pleased?
3. Were moments of silence comfortable?
4. Were some members excited about the next meeting?
5. Is the pressure on my body inward, or outward, as I think about the session?
6. Did I really want to be with the group?
7. Did I put someone down today?
8. Was I put down today? What did I do?
9. Did I blame someone today?
10. Which person do I like best?
    a. Describe this person to yourself.
    b. What do I like best about him/her? Why?
    c. Who else do I know like him/her?
    d. Who was the first person I ever knew like that?
    e. What do I want this person to do?
    f. What is this person afraid of?
    g. What would I do if I had those fears?
11. What am I afraid of?
12. Who is the first to criticize me?
13. Who in the group am I the most pleased with?
14. If I get angry, who would like it?
15. Who would be the target?
16. If I were giving out love, who would get the first share?
17. Where would I run out?
18. Who would I like to share a good session with?
19. What needs of mine were met in the group?
20. Were the needs met by the group the same as mine?
21. Did I hold back anger? Why?
22. If I had become angry, what would have happened?
23. Who would criticize me for getting angry?

24. Did I hold back a good feeling?
25. Does someone get embarrassed if I share good feelings? Who?
26. Something nice that I could say to each member of the group is . . .
27. Something nice that I could say to myself is . . . (Then say thank you.)
28. A way that I could take what I don't like about someone and change it into a positive statement is . . .
    a. Someone who talks too much: *"James, you express yourself very freely."*
    b. Someone who is always negative: *"Carol, you often see things differently."*

    (I can temper these with love and use them in the next session, or whenever appropriate.)
29. If someone asked me to sit in a group so that they could know me better, would I like that?
30. If someone accepts me and is interested in me, how do I feel?
31. If someone listens to what I am saying and asks questions, how does that make me feel?
32. If someone tries to make a safe place for me to be myself, how do I feel toward them?
33. Who in the group is the most different from me?
34. Do I want them to be like me?
35. What about them do I like?

They love you! They can't say it either.

ARTICULATION OF THE PROGRAM IN THE SELF-CONTAINED FIFTH GRADE CLASSROOM

Group Size and Composition, Time, Place, Stages for Gradual Involvement of Everyone and Child Leadership

In the ten years in which I have been doing circle sessions with children and talking to teachers about their circle sessions, it has become evident to me that there is no one correct way to carry out the Human Development Program in the classroom or in any other setting. In fact, within a few guidelines relating to the environment, time, space, and number of group members, etc., one might say that *the correct way is any way that works* for any particular teacher (or leader) and class. By way of offering guidelines, strategies that have worked for a number of teachers will be presented. The major things that need to be considered are:

GROUP SIZE AND COMPOSITION:

Since time is taken to focus on the feelings of each participant who wishes to speak in the session, and to allow the group members to listen reflectively to each other, the group will need to be kept relatively small. I have generally seen that in the fifth grade any number from eight to twelve usually works out best. When the number reaches thirteen or more it is difficult to simultaneously give everyone enough time to express him/herself and to keep the interest of the children who are not taking their turn. At this age children are generally capable of somewhat extensive verbalization — a factor which should be taken advantage of as much as possible and not stifled because of time constraints.

Each group should be as heterogeneous as possible with respect to sex, ability, and the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the children. Sometimes there will be a group in which all of the children are particularly reticent. In this rare case, bring in an expressive child who will spark the others to verbalization. Sometimes, for practical reasons, it is necessary to change the membership of a group. Once it is established, it should remain as stable as possible, however.

TIME AND SPACE:

Most circle sessions last approximately 20 to 30 minutes in the fifth grade. At first interest may abate before 20 minutes are up and you may decide to end these sessions sooner, but usually the problem seems to be carrying out all the steps within a 20-30 minute time period. For those classes with more relaxed schedules some sessions have lasted 45 minutes or more, with high interest. Generally speaking, as the children experience the sessions they become comfortable and highly motivated to express themselves, to listen reflectively and to discuss the meaning of each session.

I make few recommendations to leaders of circle sessions regarding times for conducting the sessions, but I will mention some of the times that classroom teachers have the sessions that are satisfactory for them. Often the circle is conducted in the morning as an initial activity, thereby setting a positive tone in the classroom for the rest of the day. Other teachers prefer to hold the session at the end of the school day as a kind of "coming together" before going home. Still others conduct their circles during the day at feasible times. Once a time is established, it should remain as stable as possible so that the children will be able to know that it is something that they can depend on.

With respect to scheduling many teachers have carried out the program as a part of their social studies curriculum and/or language program. The process involved in the circle session has been seen by many to be "social studies in perhaps its purest form". And the fact that it is a language program, although it is much more, is apparent. Human Development Program circle sessions are a critical component in numerous Bilingual/Bicultural programs throughout the U.S.A. and in other countries due to the compatible goals of Bilingual Education and the Human Development Program.

Since all classrooms, and other settings, vary greatly in the amount of space available, I make few recommendations along these lines. Generally, a circle session may be carried out wherever there is room and few, or no, distractions. (A discussion ensues later regarding the achievement of these conditions.) Most fifth grade teachers seem to prefer having the children sit on chairs, rather than the floor, since they seem to be less apt to invade one another's space while seated in chairs. However, many groups do sit on the floor and some teachers (and/or leaders) conduct sessions with the children out-of-doors with everyone seated in a quiet, secluded grassy area.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD THE SESSIONS BE HELD?

THE PROGRAM SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT DAILY, OR AS CLOSE TO THAT IDEAL AS POSSIBLE, IN ORDER FOR THE MOST BENEFITS TO OCCUR. The more often children are exposed to the circle session process and to the issues being discussed, the better. This is particularly true, due to the developmental nature of the topics which build understanding in the children in a sequential manner.

Such realities as large classes, overcrowded schedules, and other pressures facing you may make this difficult, expecially at first. For those teachers in typical classrooms with 28-48 children who recognize the importance of including an affective educational program, such as the Human Development Program, in the curriculum, there *are* ways to do circle sessions on a daily basis. Some plans that have been used successfully by many teachers for involving as many children as possible are described subsequently.

At first glance, the problem of involving everyone in a small group discussion with structured guidelines, even when you have an aide may seem very formidable. It *is* a challenging task and at the outset it should be stressed that you initiate the program in ways that are the most workable *for you*. I have seen that when teachers have kept from overcommitting themselves to a plan which is too complex in the beginning, the program evolves effectively, appropriately involving all of the children in a smooth fashion.

STRATEGIES FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF EVERYONE:

A number of methods have been used by teachers for involving every child in the class in the Human Development Program. What works well for one teacher and class does not always work for another. For this reason, three main strategies that have been followed successfully by a number of teachers are described as follows:

I. A Plan For Starting Three (or Four) Groups Inside of Two Weeks:

Start the year (you may want to wait a week or two after school starts to begin circles, in order to get to know each child at least in part) by arranging for each child to experience being a member of a circle session in a setting in which there are no disturbances. This will mean arranging with another staff member to take the two-thirds (or more) of your class, with whom you are not working, out and away from the classroom for those 20-30 minutes. Choose a group of ten to twelve children with whom you feel comfortable, and start with an early awareness topic. Go over the ground rules with them and then conduct the circle session in your quiet room with those few. (Figure A.) The next day, take a second group, (Figure B), and the third day, a third group, (Figure C), so that every child gets to experience the circle under "ideal conditions". (If your enrollment exceeds 36, form four groups.) The other children may have been sent to the library, to the coach, out for P.E. with another teacher, or aide, to view a film with another class, etc. Actually, it would be better if you could go through another round of circles this way, or even a third round, so that inside of two weeks or so, every child in your class has experienced two or three quiet sessions.

Finally, when all of the class is together again, initiate a discussion about the circle session ("Did you like sitting in the circle and talking as we did? Would you like to continue to have circles?") Go into a teacher-pupil planning session about the fact that from now on the entire class will be present during the circle times. Help the children to draw up a list of guidelines regarding their behavior when they are not in the circle. Since each child now knows what the sessions entail, and feels an investment in the activity, he/she will be ready to add his/her part and to follow through. If not, these children can be reminded of class decisions.

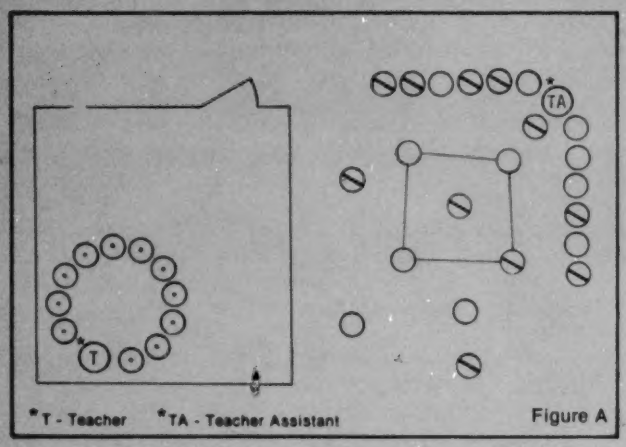

Figure A

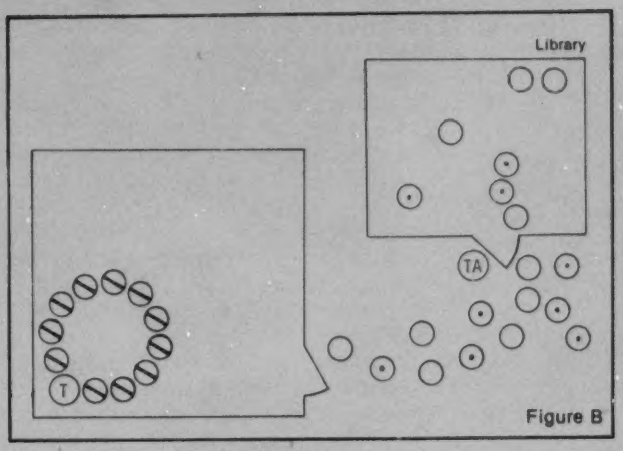

Figure B

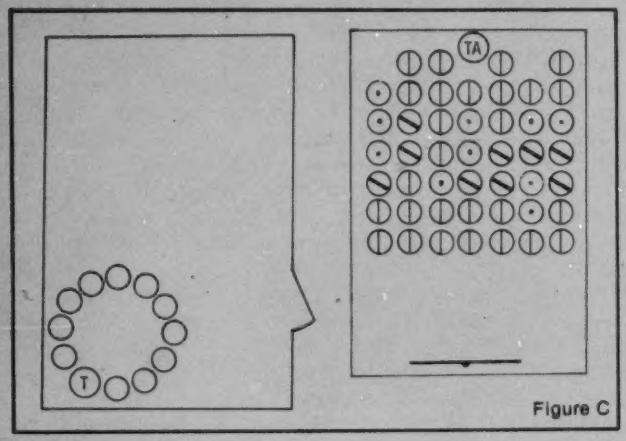

Figure C

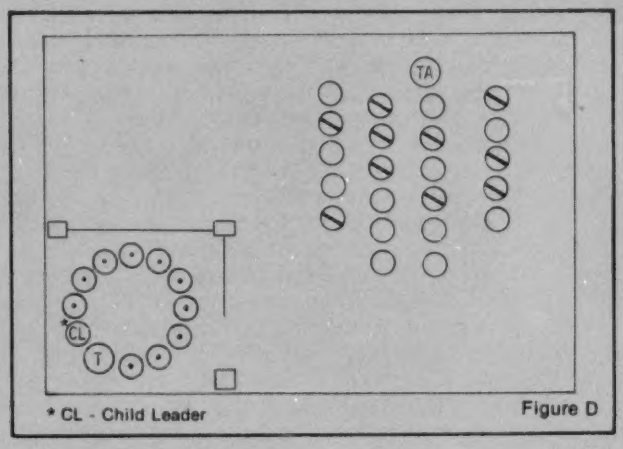

Figure D

If two adults who wish to conduct circle sessions are present, such as yourself and an aide, two circles may be conducted simultaneously involving twice as many children in the class. This is an excellent plan if it can be carried out because the children will generally get more exposure to the program. If you are limited by having a crowded schedule, and no adult assistance, meet with a different group each day. If at all possible, however, meet with each group everyday.

At this point, the following question is usually asked: *"What do I do with the rest of my class, while I am meeting with one group and the others are in the classroom?"* There are a number of different kinds of arrangements that can be made for the children who are not participating in the circle session. Some ideas for keeping everyone involved effectively and minimizing distractions are described as follows:

a. *If possible, arrange the room to insure privacy.* This may involve placing chairs or carpeting in a corner for the circle sessions, away from other work areas. You may construct dividers from existing furniture such as bookshelves or screens, or simply arrange chairs and tables in such a way that the circle area is removed from distracting elements. (Figure D.)

b. *Make use of aides or fellow teachers.* Aides can conduct a lesson with, or facilitate, the rest of the class while you are in the circle with your group. If you do not have an aide assigned to you, think about making use in this regard of auxiliary staff, volunteer parents, or junior and senior high schoolers who may have chosen to work in a nearby elementary school as an elective in their course programs. (Figure D.)

c. *When possible, have children work together,* in quiet pairs or small task-oriented groups. Make sure that the rule of quietness is understood and observed.

d. *Utilize student aides or leaders.* If the seatwork activity is in a content area, assign children who show ability in that area to be "consultants" to assist the others. In delegating such tasks, however, as always, be aware of giving too much authority, thus making a child a "stoolie".

e. *Give plenty to do.* List activities on the board, or make materials for quiet individual activities available, so that children cannot "run out of things to do" and yeild to the temptation to consult you or begin to bother others.

f. *Make the activity of non-circle youngsters fun.* Sometimes, of course, this is not possible, and you will have to assign seatwork in math or another content area. But if you can involve the rest of the class in something meaningful to them in terms of their own concerns, they will probably be less likely to interrupt the circle.

Some suggestions for "involving" kinds of activities for children who are not participating in the circle session follow. You will find that many of them make use of the affective domain, so that what children in the activity group are being asked to do is not really significantly different from those in the circles, except that theirs are, for the most part, quiet non-verbal kinds of involvement. Also, they tend to draw largely on the children's creative potential. The "ongoing project" idea is a good one to use — involving children in something begun previously, which they can simply go to and take up when it is time — requiring little or no introduction on your part. In these cases, structuring student supervision along the idea of "person in charge", "group leader", or "consultant" is wise.

Use Circle Session topics from this Activity Guide. Choose a topic from the guide for the children to illustrate. "My favorite place" for example, may be illustrated in a great number of ways, such as cut or torn paper, collage, paints, crayons, clay and pop-up pictures (drawing objects on flat paper, coloring, then cutting along the tops and bending them up to be three-dimensional).

A poem, paragraph, or story may be composed by each child about his/her favorite musical group, for example, or about another topic. (Children could compose poems or skit-scripts — later to be acted out in front of the class — on cue, such as "Someone Did Something Nice for Me".)

"Games". Teachers for years have particularly appreciated the game "Seven-Up" because of its nature as a quiet, structured, self-contained activity that involves children. There are others. One such is a non-verbal guessing game that employs creative-dramatics. List on the board, or ditto off, some ten or twenty "situation-comedy" skits. These might include the following: a scuba diver whose tanks have been filled with laughing-gas, a june-bug in a henhouse, a little child who has dropped his/her ice-cream cone on the beach and still wants to eat it, a person trapped between floors in a self-service elevator, a dog that cannot scratch an itch, etc. With a child in charge to direct the activity, one person volunteers to come up in front and act out one of the situations. After watching for awhile, the audience raises hands to guess which number of skit he/she is performing. To simplify the activity, the children may simply act out an animal, a career, some object, or other.

Journals. During the time others are in the circle, the children may make entries in a private (or share-with-teacher-only) journal. Each child keeps his/her own. This may become (according to your wishes) an entirely private diary, a "writing exercise", a written communications system with feedback between teacher and child, or other. Do not "correct" this work in the usual sense, but if it is something you will read, be sure to respond to the entries where appropriate with your own written thoughts.

Other activities in the affective domain are described at the end of each unit in this guide.

As time goes by, begin Child Leadership Training (described on pages 20 to 24) in each group, (Figure D) allowing children who volunteer the opportunity to lead the session as you sit beside him/her as leader trainer. In time, when all of the children have been trained, the groups may meet at staggered times during the day, or they may meet simultaneously in different parts of the room, while you circulate. (Figure E.) Be sure to reinforce the importance of the ground rules at this point.

Before the groups meet call the child leaders, who have volunteered to conduct the circles for the day, together to briefly remind them of the topic and to discuss how to proceed. Before the sessions begin, make sure that everyone remembers the ground rules and understands the topic. Be sure to let all of the children know that you have complete faith and trust in their ability to interact in a circle session without your full-time presence. You may decide to sit in on all three (or four) groups for a short period of time, or take part in a complete session being held by one group, alternating groups daily. (If available, use a tape recorder to record the sessions of the groups that you do not attend. Alternate the recorder from group to group on different days and allow the children to listen

to the replays of their sessions, as time allows.) At times you may offer to lead a particular activity for a particular group if they seem to be bogging down. (Your leadership is likely to remind them of some things they may have temporarily forgotten.) Before the end of the session, write one or two culminating questions pertaining to the meaning of the activity on the board, and/or encourage them to ask their own questions to each other. Be sure to announce to the groups how much time they will have for these discussions.

Other approaches, such as dividing the groups into smaller groups and forming dyads, can also be carried out at this time. (See "Child Leadership, Expanded," pages 22 to 24.)

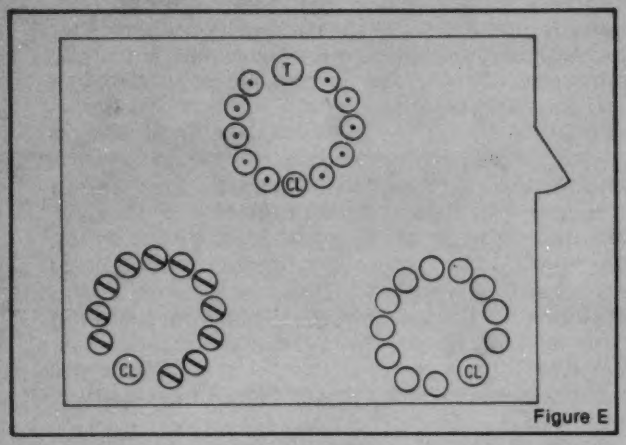

Figure E

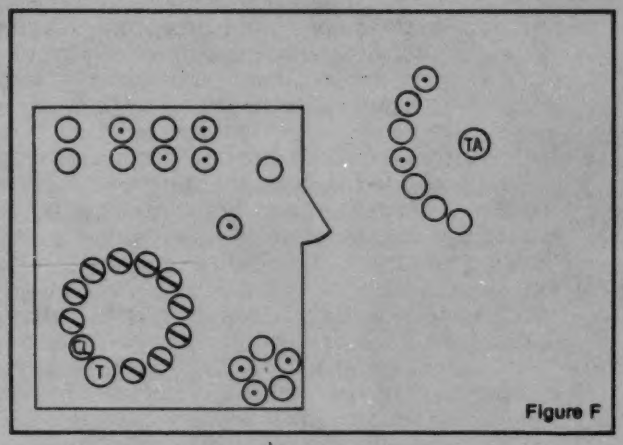

Figure F

II. A Plan for More Gradual Involvement of Everyone:

Stage 1 — One Group. Begin by telling the class about the program. Describe briefly how it works, what the purposes of the program are, and what the ground rules are. Then select a small number of children (six to ten) to become members of the first group. This number may be increased slowly until about a third of the class, but not more than 12, are included. The rest of the class may be informed that at a later time they will be included in their own circles. (Plan I includes information related to activities for the rest of the class. (See page 15.) Conduct sessions daily with group one exclusively, and begin to train them to become leaders of their own sessions. (Figure F.) Continue in this way until all of the children in the group have been trained to lead the session themselves so that they may meet independently while you begin working with the next group.

At some point during the implementation of the stages in this plan, you may find it helpful to make a pocket chart to be posted on a bulletin board in the classroom, telling such things as group membership, topics to be discussed on certain dates and who will lead each topic, etc.

One of the biggest concerns teachers have who follow this plan is deciding who shall be in the first group. It is generally worked out in a variety of ways. Some teachers choose the first group on a purely random basis, making sure, however to make it as heterogeneous as possible with respect to the sex, and racial and ethnic backgrounds of the children. In this way, you are being very careful to be as fair as possible. Others decide to tackle the matter of discipline problems in the classroom "head-on" by bringing those children into the first group who are the least well-controlled in the class. By strongly stressing and enforcing the ground rules and allowing the benefits of each session to accrue, these children in time have appeared to improve in a number of ways in some classes. Many teachers, however, going on the theory that the program should be initiated in as workable a fashion as possible *for them*, have carefully chosen children who have indicated high interest, a commitment to behave in the session according to the ground rules and who have demonstrated self-control in the class, in general. (Again, heterogeneity is an important consideration.)

Another concern of teachers at this point is how to evaluate the first sessions. There may be some degree of confusion in the children as they begin to experience this different kind of learning situation. They may be self-conscious and easily distracted at times, losing some interest in the topic and in the process. Keep this in mind as you evaluate these sessions. At a certain point, all of this changes, however, sometimes very dramatically. The children become interested in what's being said and comfortable in the group situation. The process becomes meaningful to them

personally and a feeling of cohesiveness develops in the group. Some reach this point inside of a week or two and others may take as long as a couple of months.

This interim period is often discouraging to teachers. Remember that the group will "gel" at some time. It usually doesn't happen right at first, but later there can be great enjoyment and satisfaction in being involved in this kind of communication process and in getting to know each child. Time and again teachers have reported that it is worth while to spend the energy that is required at first because it is repaid many times over in many ways.

Stage 2 — Adding Another Group. Follow the same format as was followed for group one, choosing another small group of six to ten children and adding more children gradually until another third of the class, but not more than 12, are included. If time does not permit you to meet with both groups, group one may meet independently in another part of the classroom, while you meet with group two. (Figure G.) Group one may be led by a different child each day. When group two is ready, begin child-leadership training and continue to work with the children until all are capable of leading the session. Then they may meet independently as group one has been doing.

Selecting the children for group two may be done on any basis that is appropriate for you and the class. Teachers often choose those children who show interest in what group one is doing. If groups one and two are meeting at the same time, occasionally do not hold group two's session, so that you may meet with group one again to re-establish contact and to answer questions that they may have.

Stage 3 — Adding a Third Group. Repeat the procedure already established for forming groups one and two with the remaining third of the class. While you are initiating the program with this group of children and training them to lead the sessions, groups one and two may meet independently with child leaders. (Figure H.) Again, at times, do not hold group three's session now and then so that you may meet with groups one and two.

(*Stage 4 — Adding a Fourth Group.* This stage is undertaken if your class enrollment exceeds 36. Since the circle functions best when no more than 12 children participate at one time, four groups should be set up if this is the case, dividing the class into fourths, instead of thirds. Proceed with this group, as with the others, until the members of group four are also able to lead their own sessions. Any child who approaches you indicating he/she does not want to participate in the program should not be forced to do so.)

After all three (or four) groups are able to meet independently they may meet at staggered times during the day, or simultaneously. If you arrange for them to meet simultaneously, you may circulate and sit in on the circles, as you are needed. (Figure E.) If all the groups have had the same topic, write the culminating questions on the board. If they have been discussing different topics, which is likely if this plan is followed, you may give each leader a copy of the questions from this guide. Write the questions for each group on the board, visit each group briefly to ask them the questions, or encourage the children to think of their own culminating questions. In many cases, the child-leaders will be able to adequately handle this phase as well as the rest of the responsibilities of leading the session.

When the class has arrived at this stage and the program is working smoothly, you may begin some of the variations, which are described in "Child Leadership Expanded," pages 22 to 24.

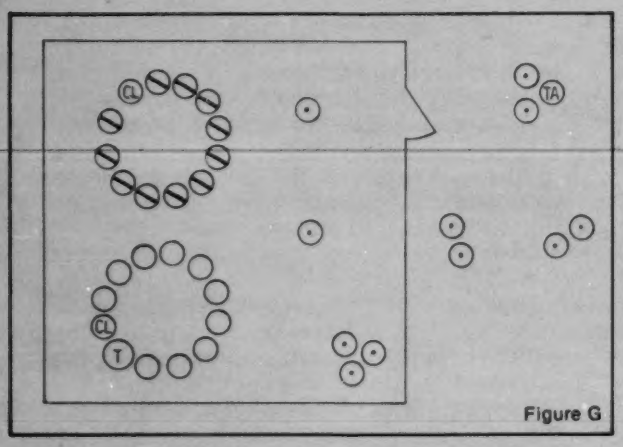

Figure G

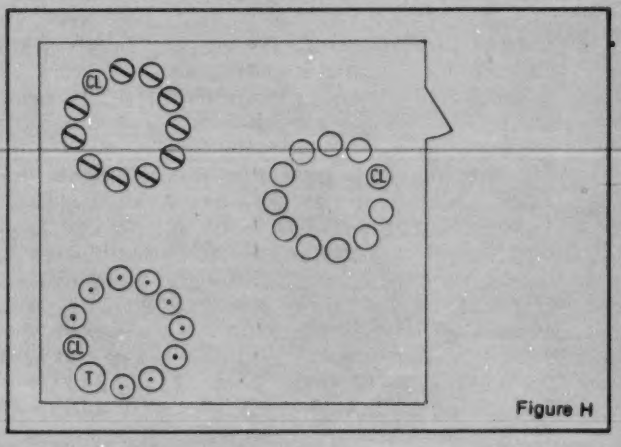

Figure H

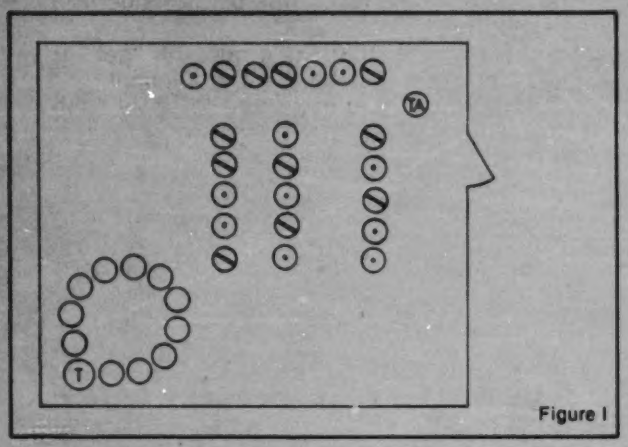

Figure I

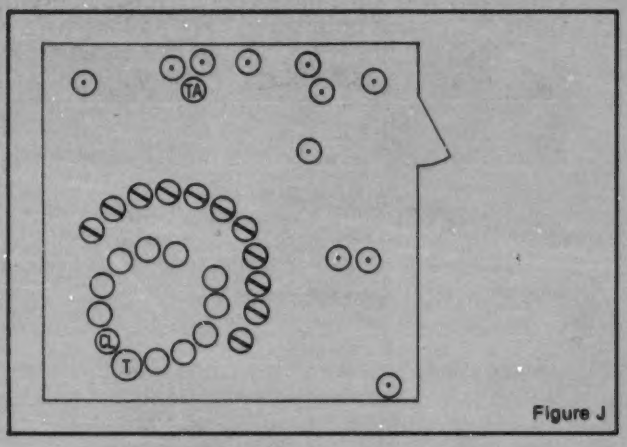

Figure J

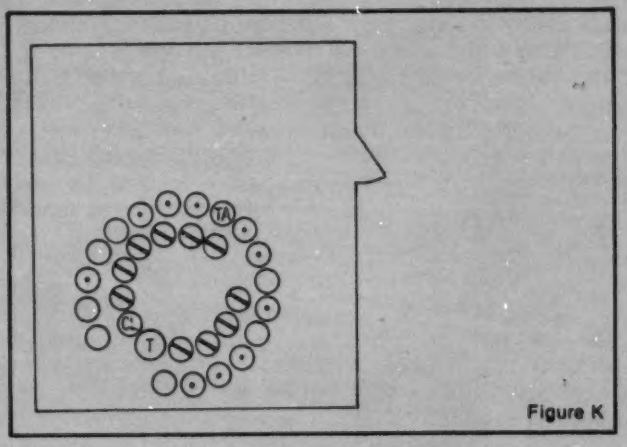

Figure K

III. A Plan for Gradually Getting Everyone Together at Once:

In the past we have suggested that teachers begin with one group (Figure I), and later add another to listen and observe as an outer circle. (Figure J.) These two groups then begin to alternate being in the inner circle, which responds verbally to the topic. Both groups may have a chance to be in the inner circle each day, while the other sits in the outer circle, if time permits, or meet in the inner circle every other day. Later a third group (and possibly a fourth) may be added to this alternating cycle. (Figure K.) The end-product of this arrangement is the involvement of everyone in the class in separate groups, which vary in number from 8 to 12 children, but which all meet together at the same time. While one group is involved in the discussion in the inner circle, the other two (or three) groups listen and observe as members of the outer circle.

If you follow this plan, place an empty chair in the inner circle (or designate a vacant spot if everyone is seated on the floor or ground) for any child in the outer circle to come to if he/she wishes very much to verbally participate. After these children have had the opportunity to speak to the topic they return to their place in the outer circle. During the review, ask someone to reflect to these children what they said too. The children in the outer circle are also invited to participate in the general review and summary for each session. Again, Child Leadership Training is begun when the children are ready — this time in the physical framework of the inner and outer circles.

This may be a workable plan for your class to follow if the ground rules are very carefully adhered to. The main advantage is that everyone is enabled to become involved with each topic. When the child is in the inner circle, he/she has the opportunity to deal with it verbally, and when he/she is in the outer circle, he/she is in a position to listen and think about the subject of discussion. In this way, "gaps" are less likely to occur for these children, than, for example, for children who experience a session every other, or every third day. They are involved in some way everyday.

The main disadvantage to this procedure (that may not exist for your class) is that it can be cumbersome. Both physical space and the ability of the children in the outer circle to remain quiet and attentive enough while not being involved verbally, may be lacking. A number of teachers have reported that it is difficult to conduct sessions in which they are attempting to carry out warm, close communication and train a child-leader, while as many as 25 children are seated just beyond the circle as sometimes restless observers.

CHILD LEADERSHIP TRAINING:

Why is Child Leadership important?

A basic assumption of the Human Development Program is that every human being (barring those having considerable sub-normal intelligence) has leadership potential and that the optimum time for energizing this ability is in childhood. I have seen in countless classrooms that the children are capable of effectively leading their own circle sessions. (See Appendix B.) I have also noted that their ability to lead is likely to transfer to other school and community functions following the practice they have gained. Often, if the young child is not given a chance to experience successful leadership practice during childhood, the chance is missed and later being responsible for a group effort or "getting up in front of people" is likely to be a frightening experience. For this reason, child leadership has become an important component of the Human Development Program. Leadership in the accepting atmosphere of the circle session is a good place to begin this important function. Then, as they grow and mature, children may *choose* to lead in certain situations and follow in others. The choice will be theirs because they will know that they have led successfully in the past.

The Teacher's Role as Leader Trainer:

After the group you are working with has become comfortable with each other and the procedure, and have participated in enough sessions so that they are familiar with the format, suggest to them that they begin to think about **volunteering** to lead the next session after you have led one more. The next day, as you begin to lead the next session, remind them to watch you closely to see what steps you go through in leading it. At the end of that session, after the summary, ask the children to tell you what the main things were that you did. They should be able to delineate the following steps:

The Leader —

1. Reminds the group of the topic and clarifies what it is about,
2. Gives each person a turn who wants one and asks each participant about his/her feelings, if they do not tell about them,
3. Conducts a review of what each person said, and
4. Conducts a culmination focusing on the major outcomes of importance of the session.

Then ask the children if anyone would like to volunteer to lead tomorrow's session. If no one volunteers accept this outcome and wait a week or two before trying again. If several volunteer, choose a child who you think is very likely to succeed. Then tell the group the topic you have in mind for tomorrow's session. Be sure to emphasize to the children that every child has leadership potential and that everyone can lead. All that is required is a little bit of courage and a lot of practice. Be as personal as possible when you make these remarks to the group. Convey to the children the feeling that you strongly believe in them.

The next day, remind the group of who the child leader will be. Tell them that you will be the trainer and will speak about the process when necessary, but that you are turning the session over to the child and your role will now become that of participant, like the other circle members. Go over the steps involved in the leadership of the circle again and tell the child leader that you will again become the leader of the circle when it is time for the culmination. (Later, as the children become experienced in the child leadership role, they are also able, in many cases, to handle the culmination too.)

Before turning the session over to the child leader add one more thing — *a new ground rule*, which states that the children who are participating are expected to fully respect the leadership position of the child leader. If they disagree with the child leader's procedure, or are aware of what he/she should do next when the child leader may have forgotten, they are not to say anything at that time unless they are asked to by the child leader. When people are learning a new skill, such as how to lead a circle session, it can be very disconcerting to have a number of other people constantly reminding them of what they are supposed to do next. For this reason, the child leader should not be heckled in any way. (Time will come at the end of the session for the group to give feedback to the child leader about his/her performance.)

Other things to review as a group before each session are specific questions the child leader might ask and how to word them, and any other things that relate to the specific topic for discussion that the child leader should think about ahead of time. (It might be a good idea to read and discuss the description of the activity in this guide with the child leader prior to the session.)

Now allow the child leader to proceed, interjecting statements yourself about the procedure, *only when absolutely necessary*. Be sure to take your turn and become involved in the review, however, like the other circle members. At times you may be able to help the child leader by tactfully dealing with children who might, in one way or another, interrupt or distract the group.

Following the review of what each person who spoke to the topic said, thank the child leader. Then culminate the session by asking the children what conclusions they have come to as a result of what transpired in the session and/or ask the child leader, and then the group in general, to ask culminating questions that they might have in mind, as time permits.

Before ending the session, conduct a brief critique of the leadership by asking the children: *"Who would like to tell (the child leader) what you liked about the way he/she conducted the session?"* Let the child leader call on each child who has a comment. Then ask the children: *"Who has a suggestion for him/her that might help him/her to do an even better job next time?"* ***Allow no more than one or two comments*** and then thank the child leader again for volunteering and doing such a good job.

At this point tell the children the topic you have in mind for tomorrow's session and ask for a volunteer to lead it. Remember that children should not lead the group until you are sure that it will be a successful experience for them. Call on children of both sexes and all racial and ethnic groups represented to have equal turns at leading the session.

Continue to have the children in the group with which you are working function as child leaders until all of them are competent enough so that the group may then meet independently while you meet with another group, as Plans I and II, described above, suggest. Many children will need only to lead once with you present and others may prefer to have you present as they practice two or more times before they feel ready to lead the group when it is meeting independently.

As you begin child leadership, discuss the following points with the children, perhaps presenting a different one each day:

While some children have more leadership potential than others, every child can be leader and can do a competent job, even though he/she may never become an expert. Perfection is not expected.

While getting attention, recognition, and experience, the leader's principle responsibility is to give each and every child the chance to express him/herself as fully and as honestly as possible. The leader is not an indoctrinator, but rather a facilitator of growth inducing expressions. The leader is sensitive to the ***feelings*** *of the child who is expressing him/herself and does not get sidetracked by the content which is less important.*

The effective leader not only remembers the format and conducts the session, but also listens carefully to what is being said so that he/she is enabled to ask pertinent questions, such as, ***"How did Alice say she felt when she plays rough with her German Shepherd?"***

In order to urge the children during the review to directly tell the person who spoke what they said, the effective leader asks, ***"Who will tell Bob what you heard him say?"*** *In this way, the child who responds will tell Bob,* ***"You*** *said that . . . and* ***you*** *felt . . . ," rather than "****He*** *told . . . and* ***he*** *felt . . ."*

The effective leader sees to it that the focal subject of the day's activities is adhered to and does not permit digressions that cannot easily soon return to the central concept.

The leader is a patient listener, and never hurries a child along. He/she is willing to listen and does so in a neutral and tolerant fashion. The only things a good leader does not tolerate are destructive comments and acting out. The good leader evokes to a maximum extent the expression

of leadership abilities on the part of as many other members of the group as is feasible, while still maintaining the focus on the basic subject of the day.

The leader is fair and kind, but firm about encouraging good listening. The leader only asks enough questions of any given child to encourage that child to give maximum expression to his/her thoughts and feelings. A good leader does not "put words into a child's mouth", or make any critical comment regarding whether or not he/she would react the same way. The leader does not make any approving or disapproving statements about what the child has reported.

The good leader is respectful at all times of all of the children and is appreciative of the opportunity to have the responsibility of being the leader. Further, the good leader is appreciative of the positive statements and the constructive criticisms that are given to him/her at the end of the session.

The more often children serve in leadership capacities, the greater becomes their awareness, self-confidence, and comprehension of social interaction. Children who are leading are practicing at being responsible and considerate people. The more they practice in a framework that never permits the abuse of power, which leads to destructive social activities, the more responsible they will become. Leadership training seen in the light of the above is really nothing more than the building of good character.

As soon as each child in the group has been trained to lead the session, the group may meet independently, while you work with another group if you are not able to meet with each group due to time constraints. Before these independent groups begin, meet briefly with the child-leaders to discuss the topics and ways to proceed in the session. Discuss with them specific questions to ask during the participation phase, and for the culmination, possibly reading the description of the activity in this guide with them. As the group begins, make sure everyone understands the topic in each circle session. Then start the session that you will be leading in another area in the classroom.

Appendix B is a transcription of an actual circle session in the fifth grade, led by a child leader in-training.

Child Leadership Expanded:

Smaller Circles . . .

In order to give more children more opportunities to lead the circle sessions and the participants a longer time for self expression, the three (or in some cases four) groups (shown in Figures E, H, and K) may be divided into six (or eight) smaller groups. (Figure L.) These groups may have from 3 to 6 members with child-leaders leading them. Before the groups begin be sure that everyone understands the topic and what is expected. As before, circulate from group to group. When a group desires your leadership, be sure to comply. As the sessions start, let the children know when to start their reviews and summaries. Again, write the culminating questions on the board, if all of the groups are discussing the same topic. (At this point, it would probably be much more workable not to have the groups discussing different ones.) Or, urge the child leaders to ask their own culminating questions, or call on the children for their questions.

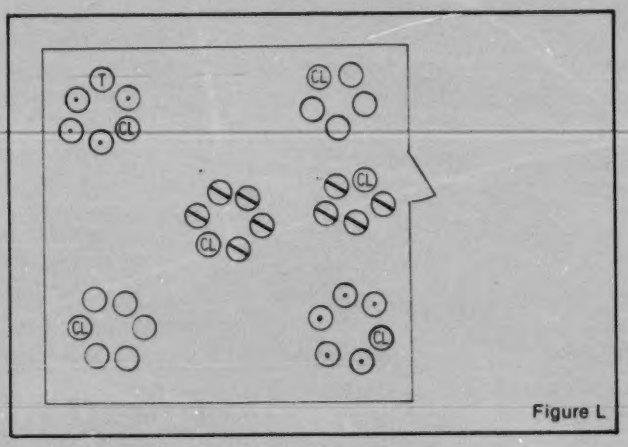

Figure L

"A Person I Feel Safe With"

The best friendships are between people who trust each other. They trust each other because they are careful not to hurt each other. They make it safe for each other to "be themselves" when they are together.

Today's topic goes hand-in-hand with, "A Place Where I Feel Safe," which preceded it. Today we will concentrate on the same concepts, this time via a close look at certain human behaviors. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Do you know someone with whom you feel safe? . . . Someone you can trust not to hurt you — your body, or your feelings? Tell us about the person and in what way you feel safe with him/her."*

Explain to the children that we are interested in knowing how the person *behaves* when you are with him/her. Ask:

> *"How do they treat you?"*
>
> *"Do you feel that it's okay to let them know how you really feel about things?"*

Following a brief review, ask the children:

1. *In most cases, did the people we told about accept or reject our feelings?*
2. *When do people hide the way they really feel?*

"Someone I Don't Trust Very Much"

Today we look closely at the opposite side of the coin, which will continue to bring the issues involved in trust and relationships into sharp focus. The best friendships are between people who trust each other. They trust each other because they are careful not to hurt each other.

This is the first topic that is negative in tone so it would probably be best if you took your turn first in order to demonstrate to the children that it is okay to discuss it. Point out to the children at the outset that today it is particularly important that we remember not to mention names. Then briefly tell about someone you don't trust or didn't trust as a child and what kinds of things the person does (or did) that causes (or caused) you not to trust them very much.

Then invite the children to take a turn. Ask:

> *"Is there someone who you don't trust very much? Tell us about what the person does that makes it hard for you to trust him/her."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How does this person make you feel when he/she does these things?"*

It is likely that some will refrain from speaking today. Many may need to "just listen". Treat the topic in a very matter-of-fact way. Be sure to demonstrate by your behavior to the children who speak that their feelings of not trusting someone are acceptable. To those who do not wish to speak, demonstrate that their wish to just listen is acceptable.

Following a review, ask the children:

1. *What kinds of things do the people that we don't trust very much do?*
2. *If you want people to trust you how do you think you should treat them?*

"Someone Who Trusts Me"

Today the children will be given the opportunity to focus their attention on how it feels to have someone trust them. Some may not have been aware, up till now, when they stopped to think about it, that there is someone who trusts them. For some of the children, the "someone" who trusts them may be an animal. (In the case of those children who cannot think of anyone who trusts them, this will be an important session too.)

Begin by asking the children:

"Tell about a relationship you have with someone you are sure trusts you."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What kind of things do you do together?"

"How do you know they trust you?"

"How does it feel to have their trust?"

Following the review, ask the children:

1. *In most (or all) of us, what was the feeling we had about having someone trust us?*
2. *Do you usually trust people who trust you?*

"A Time When I Trusted Myself", or, "I Knew I Could Do It"

Whenever we experience a situation in which we prove to ourselves that we are capable, our capacity to trust ourselves more in the future expands. It is a very positive experience overall. By sharing a time when they trusted themselves, the children are given the opportunity to reinforce these positive feelings. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you were pleased with yourself because you did something you were sure you could do. Tell us about what happened."

As the children tell about their experiences, point out to them that they trusted themselves. Ask them:

"How did you feel when you found out that you were right to trust yourself?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Can a person learn to trust him/herself more?*
2. *How?*

"When Someone Betrayed My Trust"

Today's topic differs somewhat from "Someone I Don't Trust Very Much" in that today the focus will be on a specific incident and the specific feelings which resulted, rather than reactions to repeated forms of behavior.

Since this is a negative topic, you may wish to take your turn first. Being careful not to mention the name of the person who betrayed your trust, briefly tell about an incident in which this happened to you and how you felt as a result. Tell also how much (or how little) you trusted the person after the incident.

Then ask the children:

"Have you ever had anything like this happen to you? Tell us about it."

Before they begin, remind them not to tell the name of the person who betrayed their trust. Be sure to ask:

"How did you feel when the incident took place?"

"How much (or how little) do you trust the person now?"

Following a review, ask the children:

1. *If you want someone's trust and you betray them* ***just once****, do you think they will trust you after that?*

"I Didn't Trust Someone Because of What Someone Else Said"

Often we take the word of someone else in order to "make up our minds" about a lot of things — where to go for our vacation, who to vote for, how to feel about some person, and so on. While this is to some degree an inescapable practice in our complex world, we often overdo it for a number of reasons and many people begin the habit in childhood. For this reason, we introduce the idea to the children that sometimes we decide not to trust someone purely on the basis of what someone else said, thereby at least bringing to their awareness that this is done. Some may consider further in their own minds whether this is a "good" or "bad" thing to do.

To get the ball rolling, you may decide to go first today, telling about a time when you, as a child, or recently as an adult, decided not to trust someone because of what someone else said. (The outcome of having done this is not the focus, but it may be of interest.) Then ask the children:

"Did you ever decide to not trust someone because of what someone else said? Tell us about it."

Be sure to urge the children not to mention names again today. It would not be too unusual for a number of children to decide to "just listen" today due to the rather complex nature of the topic.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Do you think it is* ***always*** *a good idea to decide whether or not to trust someone because of what someone else said?*
2. *Do you think it is* ***always*** *a bad idea?*
3. *If you want to know whether or not to trust someone, what do you think is the very best way to find out?*

"Someone I Learned to Trust"

When you trust someone you not only like them — you respect them too.

Discuss with the children how sometimes, for some reason, we have trouble trusting someone before we really give them a chance. Maybe they remind us of someone else we didn't trust or possibly they belong to some group (like an age group or racial group) that we have heard bad things about. Sometimes people do this to us, but today we will talk about how we changed ourselves from doing it to someone else.

This is a fairly complex topic so it might be a good idea if you took your turn first. Briefly tell about someone you didn't trust at first because of something about them that they couldn't help, such as someone who is very old. Tell how you felt about the person at first (being sure not to mention their name) and then what happened that caused you to see the person as they really are and how you learned to trust them and like them.

Invite the children to tell about how they learned to trust and like someone they didn't trust and like at first, by asking:

"Has anything like this ever happened to you? Tell us how you felt at first about the person and what it was that changed your attitude."

Point out how we all have the power to change ourselves when we can see that we were wrong about someone or something.

Following a brief review, ask the children:

1. *Why do you think a person, who is a member of some group, may not trust people who are members of some other group?*
2. *What do you think is needed in order for them to trust each other?*

"A Risk I Took and I Was Glad"

Sometimes we decide to trust someone when it is a risk and sometimes the risk pays off. Other times it might not. This and tomorrow's session, "I Took a Risk and I Was Sorry", therefore, go hand-in-hand and should be discussed in sequence.

Discuss the idea with the children that we all take risks everyday — sometimes little ones and sometimes big ones. Ask them:

"Have you ever tried something when you weren't sure how it would turn out, but you were glad after you did it? It may have been deciding to trust someone when you really weren't sure about the person, or it may have been some other kind of a risk. Tell us about it."

As each child takes his/her turn, ask:

"What kinds of feelings did you have before you took the risk and afterward?"

After reviewing, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What do you think gets a person to take a risk even if they are unsure, or scared, of what the results will be?*

"A Risk I Took and I Was Sorry"

This topic goes hand in hand with "I Took a Risk and I Was Glad," because it gives the children the opportunity to discuss the reality that when a risk is taken, the potential for a negative outcome is just as present as the possibility for a positive outcome.

Be sure not to allow personalities to become the focus with this topic. Begin by discussing again with the children how it is necessary for us each day to make decisions regarding risks. Sometimes these risks involve trusting someone. Whether it is this kind of a risk or not, we usually have lots of feelings before and after we take the risk. Before we take the risk, we know we might feel good or we might feel bad. The not-knowing causes feelings of uncertainty and possibly fear. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Did you ever take a risk and have it turn out badly? It could have been trusting someone who betrayed you in some way, or it could have been some other kind of a risk. Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel before taking the risk and afterward?"

After reviewing, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Sometimes risks turn out badly. Do you think, then, that a person should stop taking them?*
2. *Is someone a coward if they decide not to take a certain risk?*
3. *Even though we may feel uncertain or scared, we sometimes take some risks anyway. Why do you think we do that?*

"How I Show Someone That They Can Trust Me"

Today the children will focus their attention directly on the critical area of *how* people behave when they want someone's trust. Reflecting on their own behavior and listening to others report on theirs, the children may become more capable of seeing the link between their behavior and how they are reacted to by others. For some it may be the first time for them to directly consider the idea that if they want someone to trust them, there may be one or more things they could do to earn that trust. Begin the session by asking the children:

> ***"Think about a time when you wanted someone to trust you. What did you do then, or what would you do differently now if the situation were to happen again? Tell us about it."***

If necessary, take your turn first. Throughout the session, discuss how important it is to know that we are trusted by people whose trust we want.

After reviewing, ask the children:

1. *If you let someone know that you trust them, do you think it might help them to trust you?*
2. *If you have earned someone's trust, does that trust automatically last for as long as you know them?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO BUILDING TRUST:

Welcoming A New Student

When a new child enrolls in the class, ask the children to be sure to greet him/her. Ask for one or two volunteers to show him/her around the school, and for one or two others to play with him/her during recess for a few days. Show your appreciation to the volunteers. Ask the class to write welcoming letters to the new arrival. (Have them turn them in to you. Then give them to the new child yourself after you have read them.)

Creative Writing on Trusting Relationships

Ask the children to write a short story or poem about someone they trust and/or someone who trusts them. Tell them that if the poem or story is about someone in the class, you will give it to the person for them after you have had a chance to read it.

Creative Dramatics: Demonstrations of Trustworthy and Non-Trustworthy Behavior

Select four to six children to create and present two dramatic scenes for the class. The first may be done by two or three of the children and should illustrate how people behave which makes it difficult for others to trust them. This scene may then be followed by a drama which illustrates trustworthy behavior, enacted by the other two to three children. Urge them *not* to pattern the drama closely after what someone may have told about in a circle session.

Us and Trust

Ask the group to name the main qualities that a person who is trustworthy has. Make a chart listing the qualities and put it on a bulletin board:

"US AND TRUST"

If I Want You To Trust Me I Must:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
etc. _____

MASTERY

Effective people perceive themselves as being "okay," i.e., they have a healthy degree of self-esteem and a feeling of mastery or self confidence. They try new challenges and do not strongly fear failure. They most likely have experienced success more than failure and probably when they were successful a significant person often noted it and commented on it to them.

It has been widely observed that individuals are more likely to achieve mastery in their endeavors when they have a feeling of mastery about themselves, than they do when they lack self confidence. Generally, it seems as though people who believe in themselves are the ones who continue to succeed and the more they succeed, the more they believe in themselves. Thus, a beneficial cycle is created, giving meaning and joy to the lives of self confident people and they are provided with strength and momentum for tackling the rough times that we all face.

As noted above, other people, and their responses to what we do, play a critical role in whether or not we see ourselves as masterful. If they let us know that they are taking note of our efforts and comment positively to us when we try or succeed, our awareness that we do have energy and capabilities increases. Conversely, without favorable comment we are less aware of our capabilities even if we do try things and experience success. This would explain why so many brilliant, capable people do not regard themselves as such, but rather are painfully aware of their limitations and shortcomings. It would seem as though our culture has many ways of causing us to focus on our weaknesses rather than our assets and abilities.

In the Human Development Program we call belief in oneself a feeling of "I canness" and it is our goal in the mastery sessions to incrementally imbue each child with this feeling in a systematic fashion. In the pre-school through the first grade the mastery activities consist of giving the children a different task in each session which are geared so that success is guaranteed as much as possible. The focus in these sessions, however, is *not* the performance of the task, but the positive commentary of the leader of the session and the peer group, telling the child, *"**You can** (hop on one foot)!" or "**Can you ever** (pour water from a pitcher)!"* or words to this effect. These comments are always made immediately after the child's successful completion of the task. The key words used are *you can*, which are probably the two most important words a child ever hears. (For that matter, they are important for all of us to hear — no matter how old we are.)

The mastery sessions at the fifth grade level do not involve performance of tasks, but fifth graders can profit from this very same kind of response from you as they perform academically and socially each day at school. As a result of hearing positive commentary about their efforts and receiving the benefits of the circle sessions, the children will have the opportunity to become more aware of their strengths and less debilitated by knowledge of their weakensses.

For these reasons the mastery sessions are planned and presented in such a way that the children may become more aware of their competencies and other positive qualities. They are given the opprotunity to tell each other about things they've seen each other do that they admired and appreciated, and they are urged to tell the group about their own accomplishments and successes. They are also given a chance to deal with some of their feelings of frustration and failure, and in so doing they discover that everyone has these kinds of feelings too, to some degree.

The achievement of success, through a feeling of mastery, or "I Canness" is not the only concern of the Human Development Program. History speaks to us of many individuals who were effective and capable and who found great success in their endeavors. However, there were some who achieved success for themselves at the expense of their fellow man. They exercised their abilities and their powers selfishly and irresponsibly. As in our discussions on Awareness and Social Interaction, this vital factor of responsibleness is again stressed. By focusing on their positive behaviors and accomplishments, the children's attention is directed toward the internal and external rewards that can be gained, in terms of human enhancement and appreciation, from these kinds of actions.

The structure of the program, as equitably as possible, attempts to meet the needs of all of the children in the group. Everyone who wants one, gets a turn. Everyone is listened to. Everyone's feelings are accepted. Comparisons and judgements are not made. The circle is *not* another competitive arena, *but is guided by a spirit of cooperation*. As Bessell[1] puts it:

> *"The day's fringe lesson — there need be no losers in order to have winners in a group."*

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1 Bessell, Harold, Ph.D., "The Content is the Medium: The Confidence is the Message," *Psychology Today*, (January, 1968).

It is, therefore, an important component of the program that cooperative wheels be set in motion. It is our belief that when children practice fair, respectful, non-competitive interaction with each other, they will benefit from the experience and will likely employ these responsible behaviors in other life situations.

For these reasons the mastery sessions have been developed to help the children to deal with such matters as improving their own learning habits, taking pride in their endeavors, dealing rationally with disappointments and problems, and making responsible decisions and sticking to them. It is not the aim of the Human Development Program to participate in producing a masterful, but limited, child, rather we hope to help the children we work with to become responsibly competent.

UNIT III

MASTERY: LEARNING

Self-esteem plays a vital role in mental health. A major "occupation" of the children with whom we work is *to learn at school*. School is the site and learning is the primary function. The experiences that children have at school and the evaluations that they receive are principle sources from which they evaluate themselves. They conclude that their ability to learn coincides closely with how worthwhile they are as people. If they feel successful, feelings of self-esteem grow and they become willing to continue to be open to new information and to tackle new challenges.

It is the objective of this unit to provide children with increased feelings of worthwhileness, or "I Canness" and to help them to see the function of learning in a realistic context. Often what children do not realize is that everybody experiences some frustration from some aspect of learning. Hardly anybody finds all learning easy. Yet, learning is basic to human existence. Whether we realize it or not, we are always learning something, from our surroundings and profiting to some degree by what we have learned.

This unit focuses on this important matter initially by offering the children the opportunity to discuss whether or not they think people should learn in the first place. Then the children, through the next several topics, discuss some of the positive things that have happened to them with respect to learning and teaching. They will also discuss some of the things that they are learning to do now or have just learned to do. Some of these things may be enjoyable and some of them may be difficult. Finally, the unit culminates with a session which urges the children to deal with the issue of improving their own learning habits.

Topics on Learning:

"Should People Learn About Things?"

"The Way I Learn Best"

"Something That I Discovered"

"I Taught Myself Something"

"I Taught Something To Someone Younger Than Me"

"I Taught Something To Someone Older Than Me"

"Something I Just Learned How To Do"

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Enjoyable"

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Hard"

"I Could Learn Better If I . . ."

"Should People Learn About Things?"

In this initial topic, the children will be asked to simply give their opinions about whether or not they feel that learning is an important function. If some of the children wish to tell about personal experiences in learning that they have had, they should be encouraged to do so. However, the basic intent of this topic is simply to get the children to start thinking about learning and how it relates to their lives.

To get things started, discuss briefly with the children the variety of things that they are learning about in the class right now. Tell them about some of the things that you are learning at your level, possibly inside of the school environment, or in a class that you are taking outside, or from a book that you are reading, or other. Then simply ask the children:

"Do you think that people should learn about things? Tell us what you think."

Allow all of the children who wish to respond the opportunity to do so. After each of these children have spoken, ask the children to review what was said, telling one another the basic ideas that they heard each other relate. Culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How did our opinions differ?*

2. *In what ways were they similar?*

3. *Is there something wrong with you if your opinion is different from the opinions most other people have?*

"The Way I Learn Best"

Besides giving the children the opportunity to tell about the ways that they learn best in this session, you, as their teacher, are in a position to gain valuable and interesting information about their learning styles.

Begin the session by discussing how different people are able to learn things in different ways. Then tell the children about one of the ways that it is easiest for you to learn something. Your example could relate to the present, or to how you learned best when you were a child. Then ask the children:

"Think about some of the things that you have learned easily and well. How did you do it? Tell us about the ways that you learn best."

As the children participate, ask each one:

"How do you feel when you learn how to do something?"

Discuss briefly how important it is for each person to be able to learn the things he/she wants to learn. Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do all of us learn best in the very same way?*

2. *Is it okay for people to have different learning styles?*

"Something That I Discovered"

Discovery is an important part of learning. When something, such as a math concept is learned through discovery the concept becomes clear and the experience itself becomes exciting. When we really see our world and use our minds, we make discoveries every day. Begin this session by asking the children:

"Think about something that you discovered that has been useful to you. Tell us about the discovery and how you made it."

As each child participates, ask:

"How did you feel when you discovered (that you have to find the lowest common denominator when you multiply fractions)?"

"How do you feel now about having made the discovery?"

Briefly discuss how good it feels when we find things out. After reviewing, ask the children:

1. *Do all of us make the very same discoveries at the very same age?*

"I Taught Myself Something"

In this session the children will consider the idea that learning often happens when people make the personal effort to learn something or to "teach themselves." It is our objective today, to give the children the opportunity to tell about how they taught themselves something (or learned something all by themselves). By discussing such important events as these, the children may at some level, consider the idea that the teacher is not responsible for "teaching" them everything that's worth learning. They may also see how they are in a position to influence *their own lives* with respect to the skills and knowledge that they are motivated to achieve.

To start the activity, ask the children:

> *"Tell us about something that you taught to yourself. It could be anything that you can think of. Maybe you helped yourself to learn how to read, or understand something, or to do an exercise on the cross bar, or how to draw a picture of a certain kind of animal. It could be anything. We would like to know what you taught yourself."*

As the children begin to participate, ask:

> *"How did you feel when you realized that you had taught yourself how to do it?"*
>
> *"How does it feel now to know that you can teach yourself to do things?"*

Discuss how the struggles that we often go through to learn things may not feel good at the time, but that it's worth it very often to keep struggling because the feeling of pride that follows accomplishment is very rewarding.

Following a review, in which the children briefly repeat to one another what they taught themselves and the feeling that they had when they learned how to do the things mentioned, culminate the session by asking:

1. *What is the feeling that most of us seem to have about teaching ourselves something?*
2. *Is it only up to the teacher to teach us everything?*

"I Taught Something to Someone Younger Than Me"

Once children become aware that they can teach, learning takes on a new perspective. Today the children will think about, and discuss, the possibility of sharing their skills and knowledge with people who are younger than they are. For some of the children it may be the first time for them to consider the idea that they have something that they could share with younger children. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think about something that you taught to someone who is younger than you are. Maybe you taught a child how to play ball, how to write a word in a story that they were writing, how to buckle a belt buckle, or button a button. You could tell about anything that you taught to someone who is younger than you are. We would like to hear about it."*

When you take your turn, you could talk about some specific thing that you particularly like about teaching, or you could tell about something you showed a younger child how to do, when you were a child yourself.

As the children begin to participate, ask each one:

> *"How did you feel when you were teaching the child?"*
>
> *"How did the child seem to feel when he/she learned how to do it?"*
>
> *"When the child learned how to do it, how did you feel?"*

Following a review, focusing mainly on feelings, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *We know that all of us are learners, is it also possible that all of us are teachers too?*

"I Taught Something To Someone Older Than Me"

This topic should follow the one preceding it in this guide. Today each child will focus on the notion, "People who are older than I am are still learning, and they can even learn from me!" There may be some children today who won't be able to think of anything that they taught to someone who is older than they are, but listening to the children who do speak on this topic will be a learning experience for all, in and of itself.

Begin the session by telling about something that you may have recently taught to someone who is older than you, or you may tell about something that you taught to an older person when you were a child. Then ask the children:

"Have you ever taught something to someone who is older than you are? If you can think of something that you did teach to an older person we would like to hear about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel while it was happening?

"How did they seem to feel?"

"How do you feel about it now?"

Following a review, which focuses mainly on the feelings of the children, culminate the session by asking them:

1. *Does there ever come a day in our lives when we can stop learning things because we've already learned enough?*

2. *Can every person be a teacher?*

"Something I Just Learned How to Do"

Sometimes we don't realize how successful we are in learning until we focus directly on our accomplishments and share them with others. Today the children will do just this. Open the session by briefly discussing the concepts that we have been talking about in the circle with respect to our own learning and teaching of others. Then ask the children:

"Think about something that you just recently learned about or something you learned how to do. Tell us what it was."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel when you first started learning it?"

"How did you feel when you realized that you had learned it?"

Discuss the good feelings that come from mastering a task, and the feelings of frustration that might possibly precede the good ones. Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the similarities and differences that you noticed in the things that we said in this session?*

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Enjoyable"

It is the objective of this activity to help children focus on the idea that much of the learning that goes on in their lives can be enjoyable and rewarding.

Begin the session by talking together about the various feelings that we have when we are learning how to do something and when we are teaching other people. Tell the children that today we are going to talk about the process of learning itself. Then ask them:

> *"Think about something that you are learning right now that you like; something that is enjoyable for you. Tell us what it is."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"In what way do you find (learning about microscopic life) enjoyable?"*
>
> *"What are some of the feelings that you get when you are learning about it?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is it possible that learning can produce good feelings?*
2. *Is all learning fun?*

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Hard"

Today's session should follow, "Something I'm Learning Now That Is Enjoyable," because it relates to the other side of the coin. Sometimes learning is difficult. By discussing the things they find difficult, the children will begin to realize that everyone has certain learning problems. Thus, each child realizes that there is nothing strange or bad about him/her if a certain subject area or task does not seem enjoyable or interesting and if they have feelings of frustration. Just about everyone has trouble learning something.

Begin the session by talking about yesterday's activity, in which the children focused on how some areas of learning are enjoyable. Then ask the children:

> *"Are there things that you are learning about now that, to you, are difficult? If you feel like telling us about it, we would like to hear."*

As each child participates, ask:

> *"How do you feel while you are (taking dictation)?"*

Briefly discuss how everyone seems to have their own unique problem area. Following a review, being sure to focus on the feelings that were expressed, culminate the session by asking:

1. *If you have problems learning certain things, are you the only one who has problems with learning something?*
2. *Does it help to learn something when you are interested in it?*

"I Could Learn Better if I . . ."

Today the children will end this unit on learning by dealing with the matter of their own responsibility in the learning process. Begin the session by telling the children about how you found a way to do a better job of learning something that worked for you. Then ask the children:

> ***"Think about the ways that you learn best. If you wanted to learn something better that you may have had trouble with, what is something that you could do to help yourself? Tell us about the ideas you have."***

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"If you were to (do your homework at the library) how do you think that would help you?"*

Encourage the children to express their ideas fully about how they could improve the learning process for themselves, and to describe in what ways they would make the necessary changes. For many of the children, this will be a "working session," in which they may be dealing with some of these ideas for the first time.

As the teacher, be particularly careful not to tell the students what they should do, but simply listen to their ideas appreciatively and respectfully.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do all of us need to do the very same things to help ourselves learn better?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO LEARNING

Creative Writing and Illustrating: Something That I Learned, Away From School That I Can Teach To You

All of the children with whom we work learn many things away from school. They may be taking horseback riding lessons; they may have learned a foreign language that was spoken in their home before they learned to speak English; they may have learned how to do a good job of watering the flowerbed without knocking over the flowers. Every child has learned something that he or she can share with the class.

Ask the children to write a short story, telling about something that they learned how to do, that they didn't learn in school. As necessary, make minimal suggestions to them about the kinds of things that they could tell about. Ask them to illustrate their stories also, making pictures of themselves doing the things they learned how to do.

When the stories and pictures are completed, ask the children to share what they have written and drawn with the rest of the class. As the children make their reports, find a way to help each one teach the class about the thing that he/she reports on. For example, use a jump rope to help the child who has taken horseback riding lessons to show the class how the reins should be held. Ask the child, who speaks a language other than English at home, to teach the class how to say something in the other language, and ask the child who has learned how to water flowers, to describe to us what we need to know in order for us to be able to do it ourselves. Point out to the children that, (1) each one of us is capable of learning many things, (2) that all learning does not go on in school, and (3) that each one of us is capable of teaching the things that we know to others.

Learning Teams and Consultants:

Allow a number of children to pair off and form "teaching teams," in which a child who is proficient in one subject area, such as math, teams up with another who is proficient in another subject area, such as spelling. The two may assist one another when the class is given periods for "working together."

"Consultants" are also a good idea if all of the children are given the chance to be a consultant at one time or other in some kind of school activity. "Consultants" may also be sent to the kindergarten and first and second grades for the specific purpose of helping younger children with their assignments.

Allowing Children To Get Involved In The Teaching Process:

Frequently ask the children as you begin to present the subject matter to them:

> *"What are some of the ways that you can think of that would make learning this more interesting to you?"*

Then follow suggestions that are feasible. In this way, you are allowing the children to take some responsibility in the manner in which subject matter will be presented to them. You are also demonstrating that you are still learning about teaching and willing to learn from your students. You are letting them know that you believe that their ideas are good ones. This is one way to let children know that you genuinely respect them.

UNIT IV

SOCIAL INTERACTION: LISTENING

Listening is one of the most critical components in any transaction involving people if they are to communicate effectively. For this reason, listening is stressed as a necessity in the Human Development Program. By listening actively (focusing one's attention on the speaker) and reflectively (repeating back to the speaker what he/she said) the children are given an opportunity to focus directly on listening itself as an important process. They also gain considerable practice at listening and observing the rewards that come when people listen well to one another.

Since this is such a vital concept, so integral to the program and to everyday communication, a special unit addressing the dynamics of listening is warranted. In this unit the children will discuss giving and receiving attention, how they feel when someone listens to them, and when someone doesn't listen to them. They will discuss the causes of misunderstandings and how sometimes it may be rational, or appropriate, to express feelings in one situation but not in another. Finally, the children will focus on specific listening behaviors that indicate interest in what a person who is speaking has to say.

Topics On Listening

"How I Got Somebody to Pay Attention to Me"

"How Somebody Got Me to Give Him/Her Attention"

"A Time When Someone Listened Well to Me"

"A Time When I Listened Well to Someone"

"Once When Someone Wouldn't Listen to Me"

"A Time When It Was Okay to Tell My Feelings"

"A Time When It Wasn't Okay to Tell My Feelings"

"A Time When I Misunderstood What Someone Said"

"A Time When Someone Misunderstood What I Said"

"A Time When We Communicated Without Words"

"How I Let Others Know That I Am Interested In What They Say"

"How I Got Somebody to Pay Attention to Me"

The first two topics in this unit will concentrate on the important issue of people paying attention to one another as the primary ingredient in communication. The purpose of these two activities is to show the universality and legitimacy of the need for attention. Because it is so fundamental, there must be an almost unlimited number of ways to get this need met, ranging from the most elegant styles to the poorest possible form. For example, you can get attention by being funny, informative, dramatic, helpful, disruptive, destructive, ineffective, and so on. Another objective of these sessions will be to help the children focus on which ways are the most socially responsible. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you wanted someone to pay attention to you. Tell us about what you did to get their attention."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did the person seem to feel about the way that you chose to get his/her attention?"

"What kind of attention did you get?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the ways, that were mentioned in the session, for getting someone's attention that didn't get the person mad at us?*

2. *Is there anybody who doesn't ever need attention from someone else?*

"How Somebody Got Me To Give Him/Her Attention"

The purpose of today's activity is essentially the same as yesterday's. This time, it is approached from the other vantage point. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about a time when someone wanted your attention. What did he/she do to get it?"

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel about the way the person got your attention?"

"Did you feel like continuing to give attention to the person?"

"If you didn't, was it because of the way that they got your attention in the first place?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the ways, that were mentioned in this session, that someone used to get attention from us that didn't make us mad at him/her?*

"A Time When Someone Listened Well to Me"

Today the children will begin focusing on the critical element of listening in effective communication. By recalling, and telling about, a time when someone listened well to them, the children will begin to connect the idea of good listening with the positive feelings that result in the person who was listened to. Begin the session by briefly discussing how we are finding out as we participate in circle sessions, that listening is a must if we want to have good sessions. Then ask them:

"Think about a time when you weren't in a circle session, but you were somewhere else, and you needed, or wanted, to have someone listen to you very much, and they did listen well to you. Tell us about the situation and how it made you feel to be listened to."

As the children participate, ask them:

"Did you feel that the person who listened well to you, wanted you to be there?"

"Was it easy for you to explain what was on your mind as they listened to you?"

"How did you feel at the time?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How important do you think it is for people to listen to one another when they are talking to each other?*

"A Time When I Listened Well To Someone"

Today the children will have an opportunity to tell about a time when they listened effectively to another person. By describing their positive behavior, and taking deserved credit for it, the behavior is likely to be reinforced. Begin the session by discussing briefly with the children how we are learning to listen in the circle and how important it is that we learn to listen well. Then ask them:

"Think about a time when you were having a conversation with somebody and they were telling you something, and you know that you were doing a good job of listening as they talked. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did the person seem to feel when you listened well to what he/she was saying?"

"How do you feel about yourself now as you realize that you are able to be a good listener?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How much does it affect another person's feelings if you listen to them?*

2. *What are some of the ways that people show that they are listening?*

"Once When Someone Wouldn't Listen to Me"

Today the children will continue to focus their attention on the important element of listening respectfully to one another. In this session they will tell about a time when someone wouldn't listen to them when they needed to be listened to. Begin the session by asking them:

"Did you ever need to have someone listen to you very much, but they wouldn't do it? Tell us about the situation, without telling us who the person was, and how you felt at the time."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you feel about the person who wouldn't listen to you?"

"While you are trying to talk and someone won't listen to you, how do you feel about yourself?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the feelings that we get when we want someone to listen to us and they won't do it?*

"A Time When It Was Okay to Tell My Feelings"

Today the children will focus on the positive feelings that they get when they are able to talk to someone about their emotions and their feelings are accepted. Another objective is for them to think about how they make others feel when they listen to and accept the feelings of other people. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think about a time when you wanted to tell someone how you felt about something, and it was okay for you to do it. Tell us about the situation and how you felt when you found out that it was okay."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel toward the person who was listening to and accepting your feelings?"*
>
> *"How did you feel about yourself while the person listened to and accepted your feelings?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *If someone accepts your feelings, are they accepting you as a person?*
2. *If you accept someone's feelings, are you accepting them as a person?*

"A Time When It Wasn't Okay to Tell My Feelings"

We all face times when it is best for us to keep from telling others how we are feeling. This session may serve as a vehicle for the children to discuss the fact that just because it's okay to tell their feelings in the circle session and in some other situations, the reality is that this is not true in all situations. Begin the session by briefly discussing this idea with the children and then ask them:

> *"Can you think of a time when you were having some feelings and possibly you wanted to tell someone about them, but you knew that it wouldn't be a good idea. It may have been because you thought the person, or people, would not accept your feelings, or because it would have been inappropriate (like trying to talk to a person when they are talking to someone else on the telephone.) Without telling us who the people in your story are, tell us something about the situation and how you felt."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel when you had to keep your feelings inside?"*
>
> *"What do you think it was about the situation that made it inappropriate for you to tell your feelings?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is it a good idea for people to tell their feelings whenever they want to, in any situation?*
2. *How do you know whether or not it's going to be okay to tell your feelings?*
3. *What are some ways to find out?*

"A Time When I Misunderstood What Someone Said"

Misunderstandings between people are inevitable. However, the better we learn to listen to one another, the fewer misunderstandings we have. By telling about a time when they misunderstood what someone said, and when someone misunderstood what they said (tomorrow's session), the children will become even more familiar with the components of positive communication skills, particularly careful listening. Begin the session by discussing what a misunderstanding is, with the children. Then ask them:

> *"Think about a time when someone said something to you, but for whatever reason, you did not understand what they were saying. Tell us about the misunderstanding, and how you felt."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did the other person seem to feel when you misunderstood what they said?"*
>
> *"If you cleared up the misunderstanding, how did you do it?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Can all misunderstandings be completely avoided?*
2. *When you realize that you have misunderstood someone, what is one thing that you could do to help clear up the problem?*

"A Time When Someone Misunderstood What I Said"

Today the children will discuss the same concept that was discussed yesterday, but today they will be the one who was misunderstood. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were trying to explain something to someone, but they didn't understand what you were saying. Tell us about the misunderstanding and how it made you feel to be misunderstood."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did the other person seem to feel about the misunderstanding?"*
>
> *"If you cleared up the misunderstanding, how did you do it?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What could you do about it when it appears that someone has misunderstood what you have said?*

"A Time When We Communicated Without Words"

When we stop and think about it, it is surprising how many things, especially feelings, we can communicate to someone without the use of words. Often non-verbal communication can be a very positive experience. Such emotions as love, for example, need more than verbalization to be fully expressed. By the same token, negative sentiment can be readily transmitted through facial expression, gesture, and so on. Effective listening, therefore, requires more than simple attention to words. Briefly discuss these ideas with the children and then ask them:

> *"Think about a time when, for some reason, you couldn't talk with someone out loud so the two of you communicated with each other without words. You may*

have communicated your feelings to each other and maybe you even communicated some kind of a message. Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How were you feeling at the time?"

"How did the other person seem to be feeling?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How many different ways did we communicate without words?*

2. *If it is possible to communicate without words, why don't we do it all the time?*

"How I Let Others Know That I Am Interested In What They Say"

Today the children will focus on people's *behaviors* when they are conversing that show, "I am interested in what you are saying." Begin the session by briefly discussing with the children how such things as body posture, the way we look into someone's eyes, the facial expressions that we make, and so on, give messages to the people with whom we are talking that tell them whether or not we want to listen to them. Then ask the children:

"When someone is talking to you and you are interested in what they are saying, what specific things do you do? Tell us what they are."

As the children participate, ask them:

"When someone does that to you (leans forward, looks at you, doesn't interrupt you, and so on) how does it make you feel?"

Discuss together the idea that we *can* listen without leaning forward, without looking into the speaker's eyes, and maybe even if we interrupt sometimes, but when we do these things the speaker might not *know* that we are listening. If we do lean forward, establish eye contact, keep from interrupting and so on, then they will be *certain* that we are interested and that we are listening.

Discuss also how sometimes people do these things when they aren't really listening, but want the speaker to think they are. People can tell when someone is really listening, or faking, in most cases. The phony listener is usually only fooling him/herself and no one else.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Let's try to remember the things that we can do to let people know that we are interested in what they are saying.*

2. *Why do you think we review what each person, who spoke in each circle session, said?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITY RELATED TO LISTENING:

By way of role playing, demonstrate (1) positive, or active, and (2) non-helpful listening behaviors for the class with the aid of another adult, or a child, who understands the purpose of the demonstration and who is very secure.

First demonstrate poor listening behaviors, by having the person helping you try to tell you something while you employ all the non-listening behaviors that you can. Then ask the person who role played the part of the speaker, *"How do you feel?"* (Even though it is a role play situation, the person is likely to have some very real negative feelings.) After he/she has had a chance to tell about his/her feelings, ask the class to name the *behaviors* that they say you, the "listener," do and write them on the board. For example, a list on non-listening behaviors might include:

didn't look into speaker's eyes
interrupted
had bored expression
turned body away from speaker
laughed inappropriately
looked at watch

Repeat the demonstration, this time demonstrating active listening. Before asking the children to name the behaviors, ask the speaker how he/she feels this time. Then make the list of active listening *behaviors*, that the children saw in this demonstration. It will probably include such actions as:

turned body toward speaker
looked into speaker's eyes
did not interrupt
had interested expression
smiled

Following the demonstrations, ask the children to pick partners and pair off into dyads. Explain to them that they will be doing a listening exercise in the next ten minutes and that you will give them signals and directions for how to proceed. Then direct them through the following stages:

> First decide who will be A and who will be B. Then for two minutes, beginning at the signal, A will talk to B, telling B anything that he/she would like to say. During this time, B will do all the non-listening behaviors that he/she can think of. At the signal ending the two minutes, a one minute period will begin. During this minute, *B **will listen** as* A tells him/her how he/she feels about what just happened. Then, at the signal, for two minutes A will tell B the same thing, or something else, and this time *B **will actively listen** to A*.
>
> In the second five minutes of the exercise, the partners will reverse roles. B will talk to A, who in the first two minutes will not listen. Then B will tell A about his/her feelings for one minute. Then B will tell A the same story, or something else, for two minutes and this time A will listen.

An automatic timer will be helpful for signaling the end of time periods for this exercise. When the partners are not listening to each other (four of the ten minutes) the noise level in the room will increase to an amazing degree because they will be trying to get the listener's attention and they will be discharging their frustration almost always by laughing. When the entire exercise has been completed, conduct a class discussion, asking the following questions:

"How did you feel when your partner wouldn't listen to you?"

"How did you feel when your partner did listen?"

"How did you feel when you were not listening to your partner?"

"How did you feel when you did listen to him/her?"

"Were you aware of the changes in the noise level in the room during different parts of the exercise? What were they? What made it so noisy at times?"

"What are some things that you may have learned from the demonstrations and from doing this exercise?"

UNIT V

AWARENESS: IDENTITY

While all of the unit themes and individual topics in this activity guide are designed, in part, to enhance each child's self-knowledge, this matter is important enough to focus on directly. Hence, this unit on identity has been added to this guide.

Everyone searches in their own way for the answer to the question, "Who am I?" There is more to answering this question than what may appear to be a correct response on the surface. To attempt to find the answer each person needs to be in touch with him/herself in terms of outward manifestations such as physical and personality characteristics and cultural influences. We also need to keep in touch with ourselves on the inside by asking ourselves questions, such as: "How do I like to express myself?" "What do I do well?" "How do I react to things?" "What do I value?" "How am I feeling?" and "What kind of person am I becoming?"

Answering questions like these may help an individual to know him/herself at any one time, but all of these factors, as well as outward conditions, are always in a state of flux. Identity, therefore, is never static. The dimension of time causes our identities to actually change from one moment to the next as we grow and develop and respond to a changing world.

An important aspect in the development of identity in children (and for humans of all age groups) refers to this latter factor. Not everyone agrees on how much a person's behavior is determined, or how much they should let it be determined, by the demands of the environment. But probably most people do agree that to some extent everyone is who they are, because of what they *have* to be and do in the world in order to survive and grow physically, socially and psychologically. Therefore, the matter of how we all change from situation to situation and how this can be appropriate at times and self depreciating at others, is brought to the attention of the children in this unit. A child's sense of identity, or, "who I am," may not correspond to the role that he/she is expected to play by some individual, or group. This relates to a variety of factors in a variety of settings. A primary example is the expectations generally placed on children because of their sex. For this reason, topics that relate to this issue are presented for the children to discuss.

These sessions are preceded by a series of topics referring to the wishes and fantasies of children with respect to their identities and a closer look at themselves with respect to their cultural backgrounds and their changing physical and personality characteristics, preferences, perceptions and needs. Other topics are devoted to increasing the children's awareness of some of their strong points and likeable qualities.

The overall purpose of this unit, then, is not to try to supply the complete answer to the question, "Who am I?", but to help each child strengthen his/her own sense of identity in a positive context in the here-and-now. It is also presented to help them understand what some of the factors are that influence their changing selves and how each life situation, like each person, is unique and should be responded to by way of conscious decisions. It is, therefore, our objective to aid children in developing a sense of identity as a person who makes aware, rational choices.

Topics On Identity

"A Name I'd Like to Have"
"If I Were an Animal"
"A Person I'd Like to Be Like"
"I 'See' Things in My Own Way"
"I 'See' Things in My Own Way" (Continued)
"Something I Like About You"
"How Do I Look?"
"Who Am I Culturally?"
"A Group I Like Belonging To"
"Something That I Used to Need That I Don't Need Anymore"
"How I Can Change from One Situation to Another"
"How I Changed to Please Someone (or Some Group) But I Didn't Like That Me"
"Something I Didn't Do Because as a (Boy or Girl) I 'Shouldn't' Have"
"A Time When I Did Something That People of My Sex 'Shouldn't' Do"
"How I Would Like to Be Known by Others"

"A Name I'd Like to Have"

This topic was suggested by a fifth grader. Since our names are one of the most definite things about us it is ironic that we generally have nothing to say about what they should be. Perhaps it is in response to this situation, that most children enjoy fantasizing that they have another name — *one that they pick.*

A great deal of pleasure usually comes from this session. It is a good way to begin focusing on the concept of identity because in an enjoyable context, each child will begin to think about how they are known and how they would like to be known.

Introduce the topic to the children and discuss how our names were given to us by someone else. You may even get into a discussion about how some people have actually changed their names, sometimes going through legal channels to do so. Then ask them:

> *"Have you ever thought about what name you would have chosen for yourself, if the choice had been yours? What name would you have picked?"*

As the children begin to respond, ask them in an open-ended fashion:

> *"Tell us what the name means to you?"*

> *"How do you think you would feel being known by that name?"*

Often someone they admire will have the name they like. It could be someone they know or someone famous that they would like to know, or a character in a book, movie, TV series, etc.

After a review of what each child would like to be named and how they think they would feel having the name, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Did we all choose the names that we told about for the same reasons?*

2. *What were some of the different reasons that you noticed?*

"If I Were an Animal"

Today the children will continue to use their abilities to fantasize by making an even more dramatic choice about their identities. Although the concept may at first be startling, most people enjoy imagining what it would be like not to be human at all, but to be the animal *of their choice* and to tell about how they decided what animal they would be. Through this kind of expression, the teller and listeners are in a unique mind-frame that together they all understand. Enjoyment, and possibly insight, comes from this experience of vivid self-expression.

Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"If you were not a person, but some animal, what animal would you like to be? Tell us what you think it would be like to be the animal of your choice."*

As the children participate, ask them such questions as:

> *"How did you decide what animal you would be?"*
>
> *"How would it feel?"*
>
> *"How would you spend your time?"*
>
> *"What would be the best thing about it?"*
>
> *"When you see a (horse) what kind of feelings do you get?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What similarities and differences did you notice in the animals we named and the feelings we expressed in this session?*

"A Person I'd Like to Be Like"

This is another topic suggested by a fifth grader and comes closer to getting at the heart of the matter of identity. By thinking about someone they admire and respect in some way, the children will focus on what the characteristics and behaviors of that person are. Thus the children are likely to increase their knowledge of what specific things go into being who they want to be.

Tell the children what the topic is and ask them:

> *"Think about someone you would like to be like. It could be someone you know or someone who is famous that you would like to know, or maybe your favorite hero, or heroine from history. Tell us about the person."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How does (did) the person behave toward other people?"*

If the person that they mention is someone they know personally, ask:

> *"How do they behave toward you?"*
>
> *"How do you feel when you are with him/her?"*

These questions are asked in order to bring the kinds of relationships the person has into sharp focus.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *In what ways were the people we said we would like to be like, the same?*
2. *What were some of the feelings that we told about that we have when we are with the people who we would like to be like?*

■ **Important — see top of next page.**

■ Before this session, make preparations for tomorrow's activity by finding a picture to show to the children that depicts at least one thing that is going on that is fairly ambiguous. (A picture from a a book or magazine that is illustrating a fantasy or a mystery story will probably do.) Bring the picture to the circle and show it to the children after today's session, just before they leave the circle. *Do not discuss the picture.* Simply ask the children to write a brief story about what they see in it. Ask them *not* to discuss the picture with each other or to show each other their stories. (Be sure to write a brief story of your own.)

"I 'See' Things in My Own Way"

Everyone perceives the world in their own unique way. Sometimes it is a surprise when we come face to face with this reality — that other people see things differently than we do, but it is something that is useful for us to keep in mind. If we accept this idea, our acceptance is likely to lead to increased respect for others and for ourselves.

Today's session relates to visual perception and continues from the introduction that was made yesterday. It will end with an introduction for tomorrow's session, which relates to their perceptions of something that you will read to them.

As the children prepare to come to the circle, ask them to bring the story they wrote, about the picture you showed them yesterday.

As soon as everyone is seated discuss briefly whether or not we all see things in exactly the same way. Then ask the children to read the stories that they wrote about the things that they saw in the picture.

After everyone has read their story, review by asking the children to tell each other what they perceived in the picture, using the words, "You saw _____," "It seemed to you as if _____," etc.

Culminate the session by asking:

1. *What were some of the main ways that we perceived what was going on in the picture that were different?*
2. *Were there any similarities?*
3. *Is it okay to be different?*

■ Before the children leave the circle ask them to imagine that they are the writer of an advice column for the school paper. Tell them that you are going to read a letter from someone who wants some advice. Then ask them to go to their desks and write a response, without discussing the letter or their responses with each other. (Be sure to write a letter of your own, too.) Then read the following letter to the children:

Dear AAA Advice Services:

I have a problem. Everytime I go to bed I get the hiccups. I've tried lots of things but nothing works. Why do I get the hiccups everytime I go to bed? How can I get rid of them? I need my rest.

Signed,

Sleepy

"I 'See' Things in My Own Way (Continued)"

Today's session culminates the focus on how each person perceives, and reacts to, things in their own way.

As the children prepare for the session ask them to bring their letters to the circle which they have prepared in response to the letter requesting advice that you read to them yesterday.

Begin the session by discussing briefly how we are finding out that every person perceives in their own unique way. Then ask them to read their letters of advice that they have written to "Sleepy." Expect a good deal of joviality during this phase of the session.

Review by asking the children to tell each other what they heard each other read from their letters that told what they thought caused the hiccuping and what they thought would be a solution to the problem.

Culminate by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the main differences that we thought of that were causing Sleepy's hiccups?*

2. *What were some of the different solutions that we thought of?*

■ (Before the children leave the circle, be particularly sure to tell them that tomorrow's topic will be, "Something I Like About You." Urge them to start thinking now about something that they like about each of the other circle members.)

"Something I Like About You"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

The purpose of today's session is to give each child the opportunity to hear at least one positive statement made to him/her by a peer and/or by you, thereby increasing their awareness that they are a person with likeable qualities. It will also offer each child the opportunity to say something that is positive to someone else.

Begin the session by explaining briefly to the children what the format will be for the session. Then speak directly to one of the children saying his/her name and tell the child something that you like about his/her personality. (Example: *Martin, I like the way you make friends so easily. I can tell that you like other people and that's something I like a lot about you.*)

Then ask the children:

"Would someone else like to name someone and tell that person something they like about him or her?"

As the children do this, urge them to choose someone who has not been chosen yet. When every child who wants one has had a turn and some children have not had a positive statement made to them, tell the group,

"Now let's all think of something to tell (David) that we like about him."

Allow the group to freely make as many statements as they can to the child, telling him/her things that they like about him/her.

In the review, ask each child to tell the person who said something positive to them what they said. (Example: Martin would say, *"Mr. (or Mrs.) _____, you said that you like the way I make friends and the way I like other people a lot. That's something you like about me!*)

Culminate by asking the children:

1. *How does it make you feel to hear someone tell you something that they like about you in front of a group?*

2. *How does it feel to say something to someone about what you like about them?*

Add that each of us should make it a point to remember what was said to us and we should remind ourselves often that we have these positive qualities.

"How Do I Look"

(Due to its fairly complex nature, it's recommended that this activity be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Each person is more than what their appearance tells about them, but today the children will begin to focus directly on their individual identities by discussing their unique physical characteristics in a positive context.

Bring a mirror to the session. Begin by discussing how each person is unique and beautiful in their own way, like snowflakes. Even identical twins are not really identical; they only look alike on the outside. Then tell the group what the session will consist of.

Begin by looking in the mirror and describing what you see. By way of example, (*"I have long brown hair and hazel eyes. My nose is long and I have olive skin."*) Then tell about any other physical characteristics that you might focus on at the time. (*"I am short; I am strong, etc.*) Tell your sex (*"I am a woman or a man."*) *And then tell the group about one or two things that you particularly like about your physical self* (***"I like my long hair and my skin."***).

Then guide the children through these steps. Make sure that everyone understands that they should tell about what they observe and like about themselves *without any negative comments*. Ask them to speak in as pleased a tone as possible. Expect the giggling and laughing that will naturally result.

Review by asking the children to tell what the physical characteristics were that each child said he liked about him/herself.

Culminate the session by asking:

1. *Why do you think that it is sometimes hard for people to say what they like about their physical characteristics in front of a group?*

"Who Am I Culturally?"

(Due to its fairly complex nature, it is recommended that this activity be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Although there is general disagreement relating to how much influence culture plays, or should play, in determining our behavior, beliefs, values and attitudes, most people would probably agree that culture does play an important role. Today we will focus on cultural influences in the same positive, accepting way that we have been focusing on the children's experiences and feelings. *Each person will tell about something that they like about themselves that is a part of them as a result of their culture.*

The discussion of culture is important to all children. Those who are members of minority cultures are very aware of who they are. To experience appreciative, respectful listening as they tell about something that they like about themselves culturally will be a positive influence. Children of the majority culture often do not focus on themselves in this way. A session of this nature then, is likely to increase their awareness that they are a member of a cultural group with its own language, customs, music, beliefs, etc., and that everyone in the world is not guided by these same cultural influences.

Start the session by briefly discussing what culture is and how it influences us. Then take your turn first. Focus on the past and on the present. Tell briefly about the national backgrounds of your parents and grandparents (possibly going beyond that point) and then tell the group what country you are a citizen of. By way of example: (*"My mother's parents were born in Mexico and my father's mother was born in England and his father was born in Spain. My parents were both born in the United States and are citizens of this country. That makes me a citizen of this country, too."*) ***Then tell the group something that you like about yourself that is a part of you because of these cultural influences.*** (Example: *"I get a special feeling when I hear Mexican music. It is so rich and beautiful, like the whole culture. I feel proud when I hear it and when I dance to it. And I'm glad that I can speak Spanish. I am glad that I am a citizen of this country too and that I can speak English."*)

In the event that some children have difficulty isolating something in their minds that they like about themselves culturally, ask them to name something that they like about their culture. Another possibility would be to mention something that you know about them that has to do with their culture, or a positive quality that they possess that relates to their background in some way. Tell

about it briefly, checking with the child to be sure that you are correct, and then tell how much you like it.

Review by asking the children to tell what the qualities were that each child said he/she liked in him/herself as a result of cultural influences.

Culminate by asking:

1. *Why do you think that it is a good thing for us to be proud of our cultural backgrounds and present cultures?*

"A Group I Like Belonging To"

An important part in how we identify ourselves has to do with groups to which we belong. Most people join groups that they feel comfortable being a part of and to which they feel a sense of belonging. Today the children will have an opportunity to talk about a group that they like belonging to. (Some may mention the circle session group.) Begin the session by clarifying the topic, as follows:

> *"Think about some group that you belong to that you like. You could tell about some kind of formal club or organization or maybe just a neighborhood group of friends."*

To help the children express the feelings they have about belonging to the group that they tell about, ask:

> *"How did you feel at first when you joined the group?"*
>
> *"How do you feel about belonging to the group now?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Why do you think people join groups, clubs and organizations?*

"Something That I Used to Need That I Don't Need Anymore"

One positive way of focusing on our identities is to give attention to the area of past dependencies. As we grow and develop and become more "in charge" of our lives, we cast off old dependencies, taking more personal responsibility to meet our own needs. Today the children will give their direct attention to this area.

Begin by clarifying the topic. Tell the children:

> *"Think about something that you used to need that you don't need anymore, like a life jacket in a swimming pool, or it might be some person that you used to have some kind of need for, whom you don't anymore, like a babysitter. Tell us about something that you used to need that you don't need anymore."*

When it is your turn, you may tell about something that you needed recently that you don't need now, or something you used to need as a child that at some point you stopped needing. As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How does it make you feel when you realize that there are things that you don't need anymore because you are growing and developing on your own?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What were the main feelings that we expressed about not needing certain things anymore?*

"How I Can Change from One Situation to Another"

All human beings are equipped with the facility to adapt and change to the demands of various situations. Today the children will discuss how they are able to do this. They will focus on how exterior circumstances, such as expectations from others, influence these changes and how they feel about these circumstances and their own behavior. (In subsequent sessions the group will discuss how at times the changes we make can be very appropriate and at other times they can lead us into certain kinds of difficulties. But today we will focus mainly on the fact that all of us do have the ability to change our behavior to the needs of various situations.)

Briefly, discuss with the children how people can change their behavior from one situation to another. To clarify the topic ask the children:

> *"Have you ever been in a place doing a certain thing and then later on found yourself in another place and noticed that you were behaving in a very different way in order to meet the needs or demands of the person, or group, that you were with? Tell us about the two situations and how you behaved differently in each one."*

Be very sure not to place any moral judgments on the behavior that is described or allow any of the children to do this to each other. Ask each of the children as they describe the situations they were in:

"How did you feel in each situation?"

"How did you feel about your behavior?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What do you think would happen if people didn't have this ability to change their behavior from one situation to another?*

2. *What are some of the things about this ability of ours that you think are good?*

3. *Are there any disadvantages?*

"How I Changed to Please Someone (or Some Group) But I Didn't Like That Me"

This topic deals with some of the complexities involved in changing from one situation to another. Today the children will focus on how they changed to please someone or some group but didn't feel "right" or natural about the way they were behaving. Sometimes when we adjust our behavior to meet the needs of some person or group it is a very appropriate thing to do, even when it feels strange, so we do it anyway. Other times it can lead to feelings of self-disrespect, depending on the situation.

This session hopes to point out to the children that it is important to be flexible and to realize that there are no hard and fast rules about exactly how they should behave in each and every life situation because each one is different and needs a conscious decision from the child with respect to his/her behavior. Discuss these ideas with the children, then ask them:

> *"Think of a time when you were behaving in a certain way in order to please someone or a group, but you did not feel good about yourself as you were doing it. Tell us about it."*

As the children describe these situations, ask them:

"How did you feel inside?"

"How do you feel about it now?"

"A Person I Feel Safe With"

The best friendships are between people who trust each other. They trust each other because they are careful not to hurt each other. They make it safe for each other to "be themselves" when they are together.

Today's topic goes hand-in-hand with, "A Place Where I Feel Safe," which preceded it. Today we will concentrate on the same concepts, this time via a close look at certain human behaviors. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Do you know someone with whom you feel safe? . . . Someone you can trust not to hurt you — your body, or your feelings? Tell us about the person and in what way you feel safe with him/her."*

Explain to the children that we are interested in knowing how the person *behaves* when you are with him/her. Ask:

> *"How do they treat you?"*
>
> *"Do you feel that it's okay to let them know how you really feel about things?"*

Following a brief review, ask the children:

1. *In most cases, did the people we told about accept or reject our feelings?*
2. *When do people hide the way they really feel?*

"Someone I Don't Trust Very Much"

Today we look closely at the opposite side of the coin, which will continue to bring the issues involved in trust and relationships into sharp focus. The best friendships are between people who trust each other. They trust each other because they are careful not to hurt each other.

This is the first topic that is negative in tone so it would probably be best if you took your turn first in order to demonstrate to the children that it is okay to discuss it. Point out to the children at the outset that today it is particularly important that we remember not to mention names. Then briefly tell about someone you don't trust or didn't trust as a child and what kinds of things the person does (or did) that causes (or caused) you not to trust them very much.

Then invite the children to take a turn. Ask:

> *"Is there someone who you don't trust very much? Tell us about what the person does that makes it hard for you to trust him/her."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How does this person make you feel when he/she does these things?"*

It is likely that some will refrain from speaking today. Many may need to "just listen". Treat the topic in a very matter-of-fact way. Be sure to demonstrate by your behavior to the children who speak that their feelings of not trusting someone are acceptable. To those who do not wish to speak, demonstrate that their wish to just listen is acceptable.

Following a review, ask the children:

1. *What kinds of things do the people that we don't trust very much do?*
2. *If you want people to trust you how do you think you should treat them?*

"Someone Who Trusts Me"

Today the children will be given the opportunity to focus their attention on how it feels to have someone trust them. Some may not have been aware, up till now, when they stopped to think about it, that there is someone who trusts them. For some of the children, the "someone" who trusts them may be an animal. (In the case of those children who cannot think of anyone who trusts them, this will be an important session too.)

Begin by asking the children:

"Tell about a relationship you have with someone you are sure trusts you."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What kind of things do you do together?"

"How do you know they trust you?"

"How does it feel to have their trust?"

Following the review, ask the children:

1. *In most (or all) of us, what was the feeling we had about having someone trust us?*
2. *Do you usually trust people who trust you?*

"A Time When I Trusted Myself", or, "I Knew I Could Do It"

Whenever we experience a situation in which we prove to ourselves that we are capable, our capacity to trust ourselves more in the future expands. It is a very positive experience overall. By sharing a time when they trusted themselves, the children are given the opportunity to reinforce these positive feelings. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you were pleased with yourself because you did something you were sure you could do. Tell us about what happened."

As the children tell about their experiences, point out to them that they trusted themselves. Ask them:

"How did you feel when you found out that you were right to trust yourself?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Can a person learn to trust him/herself more?*
2. *How?*

"When Someone Betrayed My Trust"

Today's topic differs somewhat from "Someone I Don't Trust Very Much" in that today the focus will be on a specific incident and the specific feelings which resulted, rather than reactions to repeated forms of behavior.

Since this is a negative topic, you may wish to take your turn first. Being careful not to mention the name of the person who betrayed your trust, briefly tell about an incident in which this happened to you and how you felt as a result. Tell also how much (or how little) you trusted the person after the incident.

Then ask the children:

"Have you ever had anything like this happen to you? Tell us about it."

Before they begin, remind them not to tell the name of the person who betrayed their trust. Be sure to ask:

"How did you feel when the incident took place?"

"How much (or how little) do you trust the person now?"

Following a review, ask the children:

1. *If you want someone's trust and you betray them* ***just once****, do you think they will trust you after that?*

"I Didn't Trust Someone Because of What Someone Else Said"

Often we take the word of someone else in order to "make up our minds" about a lot of things — where to go for our vacation, who to vote for, how to feel about some person, and so on. While this is to some degree an inescapable practice in our complex world, we often overdo it for a number of reasons and many people begin the habit in childhood. For this reason, we introduce the idea to the children that sometimes we decide not to trust someone purely on the basis of what someone else said, thereby at least bringing to their awareness that this is done. Some may consider further in their own minds whether this is a "good" or "bad" thing to do.

To get the ball rolling, you may decide to go first today, telling about a time when you, as a child, or recently as an adult, decided not to trust someone because of what someone else said. (The outcome of having done this is not the focus, but it may be of interest.) Then ask the children:

"Did you ever decide to not trust someone because of what someone else said? Tell us about it."

Be sure to urge the children not to mention names again today. It would not be too unusual for a number of children to decide to "just listen" today due to the rather complex nature of the topic.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Do you think it is* ***always*** *a good idea to decide whether or not to trust someone because of what someone else said?*
2. *Do you think it is* ***always*** *a bad idea?*
3. *If you want to know whether or not to trust someone, what do you think is the very best way to find out?*

"Someone I Learned to Trust"

When you trust someone you not only like them — you respect them too.

Discuss with the children how sometimes, for some reason, we have trouble trusting someone before we really give them a chance. Maybe they remind us of someone else we didn't trust or possibly they belong to some group (like an age group or racial group) that we have heard bad things about. Sometimes people do this to us, but today we will talk about how we changed ourselves from doing it to someone else.

This is a fairly complex topic so it might be a good idea if you took your turn first. Briefly tell about someone you didn't trust at first because of something about them that they couldn't help, such as someone who is very old. Tell how you felt about the person at first (being sure not to mention their name) and then what happened that caused you to see the person as they really are and how you learned to trust them and like them.

Invite the children to tell about how they learned to trust and like someone they didn't trust and like at first, by asking:

"Has anything like this ever happened to you? Tell us how you felt at first about the person and what it was that changed your attitude."

Point out how we all have the power to change ourselves when we can see that we were wrong about someone or something.

Following a brief review, ask the children:

1. *Why do you think a person, who is a member of some group, may not trust people who are members of some other group?*
2. *What do you think is needed in order for them to trust each other?*

"A Risk I Took and I Was Glad"

Sometimes we decide to trust someone when it is a risk and sometimes the risk pays off. Other times it might not. This and tomorrow's session, "I Took a Risk and I Was Sorry", therefore, go hand-in-hand and should be discussed in sequence.

Discuss the idea with the children that we all take risks everyday — sometimes little ones and sometimes big ones. Ask them:

"Have you ever tried something when you weren't sure how it would turn out, but you were glad after you did it? It may have been deciding to trust someone when you really weren't sure about the person, or it may have been some other kind of a risk. Tell us about it."

As each child takes his/her turn, ask:

"What kinds of feelings did you have before you took the risk and afterward?"

After reviewing, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What do you think gets a person to take a risk even if they are unsure, or scared, of what the results will be?*

"A Risk I Took and I Was Sorry"

This topic goes hand in hand with "I Took a Risk and I Was Glad," because it gives the children the opportunity to discuss the reality that when a risk is taken, the potential for a negative outcome is just as present as the possibility for a positive outcome.

Be sure not to allow personalities to become the focus with this topic. Begin by discussing again with the children how it is necessary for us each day to make decisions regarding risks. Sometimes these risks involve trusting someone. Whether it is this kind of a risk or not, we usually have lots of feelings before and after we take the risk. Before we take the risk, we know we might feel good or we might feel bad. The not-knowing causes feelings of uncertainty and possibly fear. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Did you ever take a risk and have it turn out badly? It could have been trusting someone who betrayed you in some way, or it could have been some other kind of a risk. Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel before taking the risk and afterward?"

After reviewing, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Sometimes risks turn out badly. Do you think, then, that a person should stop taking them?*
2. *Is someone a coward if they decide not to take a certain risk?*
3. *Even though we may feel uncertain or scared, we sometimes take some risks anyway. Why do you think we do that?*

"How I Show Someone That They Can Trust Me"

Today the children will focus their attention directly on the critical area of *how* people behave when they want someone's trust. Reflecting on their own behavior and listening to others report on theirs, the children may become more capable of seeing the link between their behavior and how they are reacted to by others. For some it may be the first time for them to directly consider the idea that if they want someone to trust them, there may be one or more things they could do to earn that trust. Begin the session by asking the children:

> ***"Think about a time when you wanted someone to trust you. What did you do then, or what would you do differently now if the situation were to happen again? Tell us about it."***

If necessary, take your turn first. Throughout the session, discuss how important it is to know that we are trusted by people whose trust we want.

After reviewing, ask the children:

1. *If you let someone know that you trust them, do you think it might help them to trust you?*
2. *If you have earned someone's trust, does that trust automatically last for as long as you know them?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO BUILDING TRUST:

Welcoming A New Student

When a new child enrolls in the class, ask the children to be sure to greet him/her. Ask for one or two volunteers to show him/her around the school, and for one or two others to play with him/her during recess for a few days. Show your appreciation to the volunteers. Ask the class to write welcoming letters to the new arrival. (Have them turn them in to you. Then give them to the new child yourself after you have read them.)

Creative Writing on Trusting Relationships

Ask the children to write a short story or poem about someone they trust and/or someone who trusts them. Tell them that if the poem or story is about someone in the class, you will give it to the person for them after you have had a chance to read it.

Creative Dramatics: Demonstrations of Trustworthy and Non-Trustworthy Behavior

Select four to six children to create and present two dramatic scenes for the class. The first may be done by two or three of the children and should illustrate how people behave which makes it difficult for others to trust them. This scene may then be followed by a drama which illustrates trustworthy behavior, enacted by the other two to three children. Urge them *not* to pattern the drama closely after what someone may have told about in a circle session.

Us and Trust

Ask the group to name the main qualities that a person who is trustworthy has. Make a chart listing the qualities and put it on a bulletin board:

"US AND TRUST"

If I Want You To Trust Me I Must:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
etc. _____

MASTERY

Effective people perceive themselves as being "okay," i.e., they have a healthy degree of self-esteem and a feeling of mastery or self confidence. They try new challenges and do not strongly fear failure. They most likely have experienced success more than failure and probably when they were successful a significant person often noted it and commented on it to them.

It has been widely observed that individuals are more likely to achieve mastery in their endeavors when they have a feeling of mastery about themselves, than they do when they lack self confidence. Generally, it seems as though people who believe in themselves are the ones who continue to succeed and the more they succeed, the more they believe in themselves. Thus, a beneficial cycle is created, giving meaning and joy to the lives of self confident people and they are provided with strength and momentum for tackling the rough times that we all face.

As noted above, other people, and their responses to what we do, play a critical role in whether or not we see ourselves as masterful. If they let us know that they are taking note of our efforts and comment positively to us when we try or succeed, our awareness that we do have energy and capabilities increases. Conversely, without favorable comment we are less aware of our capabilities even if we do try things and experience success. This would explain why so many brilliant, capable people do not regard themselves as such, but rather are painfully aware of their limitations and shortcomings. It would seem as though our culture has many ways of causing us to focus on our weaknesses rather than our assets and abilities.

In the Human Development Program we call belief in oneself a feeling of "I canness" and it is our goal in the mastery sessions to incrementally imbue each child with this feeling in a systematic fashion. In the pre-school through the first grade the mastery activities consist of giving the children a different task in each session which are geared so that success is guaranteed as much as possible. The focus in these sessions, however, is *not* the performance of the task, but the positive commentary of the leader of the session and the peer group, telling the child, *"**You can** (hop on one foot)!" or "**Can you ever** (pour water from a pitcher)!"* or words to this effect. These comments are always made immediately after the child's successful completion of the task. The key words used are *you can*, which are probably the two most important words a child ever hears. (For that matter, they are important for all of us to hear — no matter how old we are.)

The mastery sessions at the fifth grade level do not involve performance of tasks, but fifth graders can profit from this very same kind of response from you as they perform academically and socially each day at school. As a result of hearing positive commentary about their efforts and receiving the benefits of the circle sessions, the children will have the opportunity to become more aware of their strengths and less debilitated by knowledge of their weakensses.

For these reasons the mastery sessions are planned and presented in such a way that the children may become more aware of their competencies and other positive qualities. They are given the opprotunity to tell each other about things they've seen each other do that they admired and appreciated, and they are urged to tell the group about their own accomplishments and successes. They are also given a chance to deal with some of their feelings of frustration and failure, and in so doing they discover that everyone has these kinds of feelings too, to some degree.

The achievement of success, through a feeling of mastery, or "I Canness" is not the only concern of the Human Development Program. History speaks to us of many individuals who were effective and capable and who found great success in their endeavors. However, there were some who achieved success for themselves at the expense of their fellow man. They exercised their abilities and their powers selfishly and irresponsibly. As in our discussions on Awareness and Social Interaction, this vital factor of responsibleness is again stressed. By focusing on their positive behaviors and accomplishments, the children's attention is directed toward the internal and external rewards that can be gained, in terms of human enhancement and appreciation, from these kinds of actions.

The structure of the program, as equitably as possible, attempts to meet the needs of all of the children in the group. Everyone who wants one, gets a turn. Everyone is listened to. Everyone's feelings are accepted. Comparisons and judgements are not made. The circle is *not* another competitive arena, *but is guided by a spirit of cooperation*. As Bessell[1] puts it:

> *"The day's fringe lesson — there need be no losers in order to have winners in a group."*

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1 Bessell, Harold, Ph.D., "The Content is the Medium: The Confidence is the Message," *Psychology Today*, (January, 1968).

It is, therefore, an important component of the program that cooperative wheels be set in motion. It is our belief that when children practice fair, respectful, non-competitive interaction with each other, they will benefit from the experience and will likely employ these responsible behaviors in other life situations.

For these reasons the mastery sessions have been developed to help the children to deal with such matters as improving their own learning habits, taking pride in their endeavors, dealing rationally with disappointments and problems, and making responsible decisions and sticking to them. It is not the aim of the Human Development Program to participate in producing a masterful, but limited, child, rather we hope to help the children we work with to become responsibly competent.

UNIT III

MASTERY: LEARNING

Self-esteem plays a vital role in mental health. A major "occupation" of the children with whom we work is *to learn at school*. School is the site and learning is the primary function. The experiences that children have at school and the evaluations that they receive are principle sources from which they evaluate themselves. They conclude that their ability to learn coincides closely with how worthwhile they are as people. If they feel successful, feelings of self-esteem grow and they become willing to continue to be open to new information and to tackle new challenges.

It is the objective of this unit to provide children with increased feelings of worthwhileness, or "I Canness" and to help them to see the function of learning in a realistic context. Often what children do not realize is that everybody experiences some frustration from some aspect of learning. Hardly anybody finds all learning easy. Yet, learning is basic to human existence. Whether we realize it or not, we are always learning something, from our surroundings and profiting to some degree by what we have learned.

This unit focuses on this important matter initially by offering the children the opportunity to discuss whether or not they think people should learn in the first place. Then the children, through the next several topics, discuss some of the positive things that have happened to them with respect to learning and teaching. They will also discuss some of the things that they are learning to do now or have just learned to do. Some of these things may be enjoyable and some of them may be difficult. Finally, the unit culminates with a session which urges the children to deal with the issue of improving their own learning habits.

Topics on Learning:

"Should People Learn About Things?"

"The Way I Learn Best"

"Something That I Discovered"

"I Taught Myself Something"

"I Taught Something To Someone Younger Than Me"

"I Taught Something To Someone Older Than Me"

"Something I Just Learned How To Do"

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Enjoyable"

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Hard"

"I Could Learn Better If I . . ."

"Should People Learn About Things?"

In this initial topic, the children will be asked to simply give their opinions about whether or not they feel that learning is an important function. If some of the children wish to tell about personal experiences in learning that they have had, they should be encouraged to do so. However, the basic intent of this topic is simply to get the children to start thinking about learning and how it relates to their lives.

To get things started, discuss briefly with the children the variety of things that they are learning about in the class right now. Tell them about some of the things that you are learning at your level, possibly inside of the school environment, or in a class that you are taking outside, or from a book that you are reading, or other. Then simply ask the children:

"Do you think that people should learn about things? Tell us what you think."

Allow all of the children who wish to respond the opportunity to do so. After each of these children have spoken, ask the children to review what was said, telling one another the basic ideas that they heard each other relate. Culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How did our opinions differ?*

2. *In what ways were they similar?*

3. *Is there something wrong with you if your opinion is different from the opinions most other people have?*

"The Way I Learn Best"

Besides giving the children the opportunity to tell about the ways that they learn best in this session, you, as their teacher, are in a position to gain valuable and interesting information about their learning styles.

Begin the session by discussing how different people are able to learn things in different ways. Then tell the children about one of the ways that it is easiest for you to learn something. Your example could relate to the present, or to how you learned best when you were a child. Then ask the children:

"Think about some of the things that you have learned easily and well. How did you do it? Tell us about the ways that you learn best."

As the children participate, ask each one:

"How do you feel when you learn how to do something?"

Discuss briefly how important it is for each person to be able to learn the things he/she wants to learn. Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do all of us learn best in the very same way?*

2. *Is it okay for people to have different learning styles?*

"Something That I Discovered"

Discovery is an important part of learning. When something, such as a math concept is learned through discovery the concept becomes clear and the experience itself becomes exciting. When we really see our world and use our minds, we make discoveries every day. Begin this session by asking the children:

"Think about something that you discovered that has been useful to you. Tell us about the discovery and how you made it."

As each child participates, ask:

"How did you feel when you discovered (that you have to find the lowest common denominator when you multiply fractions)?"

"How do you feel now about having made the discovery?"

Briefly discuss how good it feels when we find things out. After reviewing, ask the children:

1. *Do all of us make the very same discoveries at the very same age?*

"I Taught Myself Something"

In this session the children will consider the idea that learning often happens when people make the personal effort to learn something or to "teach themselves." It is our objective today, to give the children the opportunity to tell about how they taught themselves something (or learned something all by themselves). By discussing such important events as these, the children may at some level, consider the idea that the teacher is not responsible for "teaching" them everything that's worth learning. They may also see how they are in a position to influence *their own lives* with respect to the skills and knowledge that they are motivated to achieve.

To start the activity, ask the children:

> *"Tell us about something that you taught to yourself. It could be anything that you can think of. Maybe you helped yourself to learn how to read, or understand something, or to do an exercise on the cross bar, or how to draw a picture of a certain kind of animal. It could be anything. We would like to know what you taught yourself."*

As the children begin to participate, ask:

> *"How did you feel when you realized that you had taught yourself how to do it?"*
>
> *"How does it feel now to know that you can teach yourself to do things?"*

Discuss how the struggles that we often go through to learn things may not feel good at the time, but that it's worth it very often to keep struggling because the feeling of pride that follows accomplishment is very rewarding.

Following a review, in which the children briefly repeat to one another what they taught themselves and the feeling that they had when they learned how to do the things mentioned, culminate the session by asking:

1. *What is the feeling that most of us seem to have about teaching ourselves something?*
2. *Is it only up to the teacher to teach us everything?*

"I Taught Something to Someone Younger Than Me"

Once children become aware that they can teach, learning takes on a new perspective. Today the children will think about, and discuss, the possibility of sharing their skills and knowledge with people who are younger than they are. For some of the children it may be the first time for them to consider the idea that they have something that they could share with younger children. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think about something that you taught to someone who is younger than you are. Maybe you taught a child how to play ball, how to write a word in a story that they were writing, how to buckle a belt buckle, or button a button. You could tell about anything that you taught to someone who is younger than you are. We would like to hear about it."*

When you take your turn, you could talk about some specific thing that you particularly like about teaching, or you could tell about something you showed a younger child how to do, when you were a child yourself.

As the children begin to participate, ask each one:

> *"How did you feel when you were teaching the child?"*
>
> *"How did the child seem to feel when he/she learned how to do it?"*
>
> *"When the child learned how to do it, how did you feel?"*

Following a review, focusing mainly on feelings, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *We know that all of us are learners, is it also possible that all of us are teachers too?*

"I Taught Something To Someone Older Than Me"

This topic should follow the one preceding it in this guide. Today each child will focus on the notion, "People who are older than I am are still learning, and they can even learn from me!" There may be some children today who won't be able to think of anything that they taught to someone who is older than they are, but listening to the children who do speak on this topic will be a learning experience for all, in and of itself.

Begin the session by telling about something that you may have recently taught to someone who is older than you, or you may tell about something that you taught to an older person when you were a child. Then ask the children:

> *"Have you ever taught something to someone who is older than you are? If you can think of something that you did teach to an older person we would like to hear about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel while it was happening?*
>
> *"How did they seem to feel?"*
>
> *"How do you feel about it now?"*

Following a review, which focuses mainly on the feelings of the children, culminate the session by asking them:

1. *Does there ever come a day in our lives when we can stop learning things because we've already learned enough?*
2. *Can every person be a teacher?*

"Something I Just Learned How to Do"

Sometimes we don't realize how successful we are in learning until we focus directly on our accomplishments and share them with others. Today the children will do just this. Open the session by briefly discussing the concepts that we have been talking about in the circle with respect to our own learning and teaching of others. Then ask the children:

> *"Think about something that you just recently learned about or something you learned how to do. Tell us what it was."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel when you first started learning it?"*
>
> *"How did you feel when you realized that you had learned it?"*

Discuss the good feelings that come from mastering a task, and the feelings of frustration that might possibly precede the good ones. Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the similarities and differences that you noticed in the things that we said in this session?*

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Enjoyable"

It is the objective of this activity to help children focus on the idea that much of the learning that goes on in their lives can be enjoyable and rewarding.

Begin the session by talking together about the various feelings that we have when we are learning how to do something and when we are teaching other people. Tell the children that today we are going to talk about the process of learning itself. Then ask them:

> *"Think about something that you are learning right now that you like; something that is enjoyable for you. Tell us what it is."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"In what way do you find (learning about microscopic life) enjoyable?"*
>
> *"What are some of the feelings that you get when you are learning about it?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is it possible that learning can produce good feelings?*
2. *Is all learning fun?*

"Something I'm Learning About Now That Is Hard"

Today's session should follow, "Something I'm Learning Now That Is Enjoyable," because it relates to the other side of the coin. Sometimes learning is difficult. By discussing the things they find difficult, the children will begin to realize that everyone has certain learning problems. Thus, each child realizes that there is nothing strange or bad about him/her if a certain subject area or task does not seem enjoyable or interesting and if they have feelings of frustration. Just about everyone has trouble learning something.

Begin the session by talking about yesterday's activity, in which the children focused on how some areas of learning are enjoyable. Then ask the children:

> *"Are there things that you are learning about now that, to you, are difficult? If you feel like telling us about it, we would like to hear."*

As each child participates, ask:

> *"How do you feel while you are (taking dictation)?"*

Briefly discuss how everyone seems to have their own unique problem area. Following a review, being sure to focus on the feelings that were expressed, culminate the session by asking:

1. *If you have problems learning certain things, are you the only one who has problems with learning something?*
2. *Does it help to learn something when you are interested in it?*

"I Could Learn Better if I . . ."

Today the children will end this unit on learning by dealing with the matter of their own responsibility in the learning process. Begin the session by telling the children about how you found a way to do a better job of learning something that worked for you. Then ask the children:

> *"Think about the ways that you learn best. If you wanted to learn something better that you may have had trouble with, what is something that you could do to help yourself? Tell us about the ideas you have."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"If you were to (do your homework at the library) how do you think that would help you?"*

Encourage the children to express their ideas fully about how they could improve the learning process for themselves, and to describe in what ways they would make the necessary changes. For many of the children, this will be a "working session," in which they may be dealing with some of these ideas for the first time.

As the teacher, be particularly careful not to tell the students what they should do, but simply listen to their ideas appreciatively and respectfully.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do all of us need to do the very same things to help ourselves learn better?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO LEARNING

Creative Writing and Illustrating: Something That I Learned, Away From School That I Can Teach To You

All of the children with whom we work learn many things away from school. They may be taking horseback riding lessons; they may have learned a foreign language that was spoken in their home before they learned to speak English; they may have learned how to do a good job of watering the flowerbed without knocking over the flowers. Every child has learned something that he or she can share with the class.

Ask the children to write a short story, telling about something that they learned how to do, that they didn't learn in school. As necessary, make minimal suggestions to them about the kinds of things that they could tell about. Ask them to illustrate their stories also, making pictures of themselves doing the things they learned how to do.

When the stories and pictures are completed, ask the children to share what they have written and drawn with the rest of the class. As the children make their reports, find a way to help each one teach the class about the thing that he/she reports on. For example, use a jump rope to help the child who has taken horseback riding lessons to show the class how the reins should be held. Ask the child, who speaks a language other than English at home, to teach the class how to say something in the other language, and ask the child who has learned how to water flowers, to describe to us what we need to know in order for us to be able to do it ourselves. Point out to the children that, (1) each one of us is capable of learning many things, (2) that all learning does not go on in school, and (3) that each one of us is capable of teaching the things that we know to others.

Learning Teams and Consultants:

Allow a number of children to pair off and form "teaching teams," in which a child who is proficient in one subject area, such as math, teams up with another who is proficient in another subject area, such as spelling. The two may assist one another when the class is given periods for "working together."

"Consultants" are also a good idea if all of the children are given the chance to be a consultant at one time or other in some kind of school activity. "Consultants" may also be sent to the kindergarten and first and second grades for the specific purpose of helping younger children with their assignments.

Allowing Children To Get Involved In The Teaching Process:

Frequently ask the children as you begin to present the subject matter to them:

> *"What are some of the ways that you can think of that would make learning this more interesting to you?"*

Then follow suggestions that are feasible. In this way, you are allowing the children to take some responsibility in the manner in which subject matter will be presented to them. You are also demonstrating that you are still learning about teaching and willing to learn from your students. You are letting them know that you believe that their ideas are good ones. This is one way to let children know that you genuinely respect them.

UNIT IV

SOCIAL INTERACTION: LISTENING

Listening is one of the most critical components in any transaction involving people if they are to communicate effectively. For this reason, listening is stressed as a necessity in the Human Development Program. By listening actively (focusing one's attention on the speaker) and reflectively (repeating back to the speaker what he/she said) the children are given an opportunity to focus directly on listening itself as an important process. They also gain considerable practice at listening and observing the rewards that come when people listen well to one another.

Since this is such a vital concept, so integral to the program and to everyday communication, a special unit addressing the dynamics of listening is warranted. In this unit the children will discuss giving and receiving attention, how they feel when someone listens to them, and when someone doesn't listen to them. They will discuss the causes of misunderstandings and how sometimes it may be rational, or appropriate, to express feelings in one situation but not in another. Finally, the children will focus on specific listening behaviors that indicate interest in what a person who is speaking has to say.

Topics On Listening

"How I Got Somebody to Pay Attention to Me"

"How Somebody Got Me to Give Him/Her Attention"

"A Time When Someone Listened Well to Me"

"A Time When I Listened Well to Someone"

"Once When Someone Wouldn't Listen to Me"

"A Time When It Was Okay to Tell My Feelings"

"A Time When It Wasn't Okay to Tell My Feelings"

"A Time When I Misunderstood What Someone Said"

"A Time When Someone Misunderstood What I Said"

"A Time When We Communicated Without Words"

"How I Let Others Know That I Am Interested In What They Say"

"How I Got Somebody to Pay Attention to Me"

The first two topics in this unit will concentrate on the important issue of people paying attention to one another as the primary ingredient in communication. The purpose of these two activities is to show the universality and legitimacy of the need for attention. Because it is so fundamental, there must be an almost unlimited number of ways to get this need met, ranging from the most elegant styles to the poorest possible form. For example, you can gat attention by being funny, informative, dramatic, helpful, disruptive, destructive, ineffective, and so on. Another objective of these sessions will be to help the children focus on which ways are the most socially responsible. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you wanted someone to pay attention to you. Tell us about what you did to get their attention."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did the person seem to feel about the way that you chose to get his/her attention?"

"What kind of attention did you get?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the ways, that were mentioned in the session, for getting someone's attention that didn't get the person mad at us?*

2. *Is there anybody who doesn't ever need attention from someone else?*

"How Somebody Got Me To Give Him/Her Attention"

The purpose of today's activity is essentially the same as yesterday's. This time, it is approached from the other vantage point. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about a time when someone wanted your attention. What did he/she do to get it?"

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel about the way the person got your attention?"

"Did you feel like continuing to give attention to the person?"

"If you didn't, was it because of the way that they got your attention in the first place?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the ways, that were mentioned in this session, that someone used to get attention from us that didn't make us mad at him/her?*

"A Time When Someone Listened Well to Me"

Today the children will begin focusing on the critical element of listening in effective communication. By recalling, and telling about, a time when someone listened well to them, the children will begin to connect the idea of good listening with the positive feelings that result in the person who was listened to. Begin the session by briefly discussing how we are finding out as we participate in circle sessions, that listening is a must if we want to have good sessions. Then ask them:

"Think about a time when you weren't in a circle session, but you were somewhere else, and you needed, or wanted, to have someone listen to you very much, and they did listen well to you. Tell us about the situation and how it made you feel to be listened to."

As the children participate, ask them:

"Did you feel that the person who listened well to you, wanted you to be there?"

"Was it easy for you to explain what was on your mind as they listened to you?"

"How did you feel at the time?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How important do you think it is for people to listen to one another when they are talking to each other?*

"A Time When I Listened Well To Someone"

Today the children will have an opportunity to tell about a time when they listened effectively to another person. By describing their positive behavior, and taking deserved credit for it, the behavior is likely to be reinforced. Begin the session by discussing briefly with the children how we are learning to listen in the circle and how important it is that we learn to listen well. Then ask them:

"Think about a time when you were having a conversation with somebody and they were telling you something, and you know that you were doing a good job of listening as they talked. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did the person seem to feel when you listened well to what he/she was saying?"

"How do you feel about yourself now as you realize that you are able to be a good listener?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How much does it affect another person's feelings if you listen to them?*

2. *What are some of the ways that people show that they are listening?*

"Once When Someone Wouldn't Listen to Me"

Today the children will continue to focus their attention on the important element of listening respectfully to one another. In this session they will tell about a time when someone wouldn't listen to them when they needed to be listened to. Begin the session by asking them:

"Did you ever need to have someone listen to you very much, but they wouldn't do it? Tell us about the situation, without telling us who the person was, and how you felt at the time."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you feel about the person who wouldn't listen to you?"

"While you are trying to talk and someone won't listen to you, how do you feel about yourself?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the feelings that we get when we want someone to listen to us and they won't do it?*

"A Time When It Was Okay to Tell My Feelings"

Today the children will focus on the positive feelings that they get when they are able to talk to someone about their emotions and their feelings are accepted. Another objective is for them to think about how they make others feel when they listen to and accept the feelings of other people. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think about a time when you wanted to tell someone how you felt about something, and it was okay for you to do it. Tell us about the situation and how you felt when you found out that it was okay."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel toward the person who was listening to and accepting your feelings?"*
>
> *"How did you feel about yourself while the person listened to and accepted your feelings?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *If someone accepts your feelings, are they accepting you as a person?*
2. *If you accept someone's feelings, are you accepting them as a person?*

"A Time When It Wasn't Okay to Tell My Feelings"

We all face times when it is best for us to keep from telling others how we are feeling. This session may serve as a vehicle for the children to discuss the fact that just because it's okay to tell their feelings in the circle session and in some other situations, the reality is that this is not true in all situations. Begin the session by briefly discussing this idea with the children and then ask them:

> *"Can you think of a time when you were having some feelings and possibly you wanted to tell someone about them, but you knew that it wouldn't be a good idea. It may have been because you thought the person, or people, would not accept your feelings, or because it would have been inappropriate (like trying to talk to a person when they are talking to someone else on the telephone.) Without telling us who the people in your story are, tell us something about the situation and how you felt."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel when you had to keep your feelings inside?"*
>
> *"What do you think it was about the situation that made it inappropriate for you to tell your feelings?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is it a good idea for people to tell their feelings whenever they want to, in any situation?*
2. *How do you know whether or not it's going to be okay to tell your feelings?*
3. *What are some ways to find out?*

"A Time When I Misunderstood What Someone Said"

Misunderstandings between people are inevitable. However, the better we learn to listen to one another, the fewer misunderstandings we have. By telling about a time when they misunderstood what someone said, and when someone misunderstood what they said (tomorrow's session), the children will become even more familiar with the components of positive communication skills, particularly careful listening. Begin the session by discussing what a misunderstanding is, with the children. Then ask them:

> *"Think about a time when someone said something to you, but for whatever reason, you did not understand what they were saying. Tell us about the misunderstanding, and how you felt."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did the other person seem to feel when you misunderstood what they said?"*
>
> *"If you cleared up the misunderstanding, how did you do it?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Can all misunderstandings be completely avoided?*
2. *When you realize that you have misunderstood someone, what is one thing that you could do to help clear up the problem?*

"A Time When Someone Misunderstood What I Said"

Today the children will discuss the same concept that was discussed yesterday, but today they will be the one who was misunderstood. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were trying to explain something to someone, but they didn't understand what you were saying. Tell us about the misunderstanding and how it made you feel to be misunderstood."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did the other person seem to feel about the misunderstanding?"*
>
> *"If you cleared up the misunderstanding, how did you do it?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What could you do about it when it appears that someone has misunderstood what you have said?*

"A Time When We Communicated Without Words"

When we stop and think about it, it is surprising how many things, especially feelings, we can communicate to someone without the use of words. Often non-verbal communication can be a very positive experience. Such emotions as love, for example, need more than verbalization to be fully expressed. By the same token, negative sentiment can be readily transmitted through facial expression, gesture, and so on. Effective listening, therefore, requires more than simple attention to words. Briefly discuss these ideas with the children and then ask them:

> *"Think about a time when, for some reason, you couldn't talk with someone out loud so the two of you communicated with each other without words. You may*

have communicated your feelings to each other and maybe you even communicated some kind of a message. Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How were you feeling at the time?"

"How did the other person seem to be feeling?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *How many different ways did we communicate without words?*

2. *If it is possible to communicate without words, why don't we do it all the time?*

"How I Let Others Know That I Am Interested In What They Say"

Today the children will focus on people's *behaviors* when they are conversing that show, "I am interested in what you are saying." Begin the session by briefly discussing with the children how such things as body posture, the way we look into someone's eyes, the facial expressions that we make, and so on, give messages to the people with whom we are talking that tell them whether or not we want to listen to them. Then ask the children:

"When someone is talking to you and you are interested in what they are saying, what specific things do you do? Tell us what they are."

As the children participate, ask them:

"When someone does that to you (leans forward, looks at you, doesn't interrupt you, and so on) how does it make you feel?"

Discuss together the idea that we *can* listen without leaning forward, without looking into the speaker's eyes, and maybe even if we interrupt sometimes, but when we do these things the speaker might not *know* that we are listening. If we do lean forward, establish eye contact, keep from interrupting and so on, then they will be *certain* that we are interested and that we are listening.

Discuss also how sometimes people do these things when they aren't really listening, but want the speaker to think they are. People can tell when someone is really listening, or faking, in most cases. The phony listener is usually only fooling him/herself and no one else.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Let's try to remember the things that we can do to let people know that we are interested in what they are saying.*

2. *Why do you think we review what each person, who spoke in each circle session, said?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITY RELATED TO LISTENING:

By way of role playing, demonstrate (1) positive, or active, and (2) non-helpful listening behaviors for the class with the aid of another adult, or a child, who understands the purpose of the demonstration and who is very secure.

First demonstrate poor listening behaviors, by having the person helping you try to tell you something while you employ all the non-listening behaviors that you can. Then ask the person who role played the part of the speaker, *"How do you feel?"* (Even though it is a role play situation, the person is likely to have some very real negative feelings.) After he/she has had a chance to tell about his/her feelings, ask the class to name the *behaviors* that they say you, the "listener," do and write them on the board. For example, a list on non-listening behaviors might include:

didn't look into speaker's eyes
interrupted
had bored expression
turned body away from speaker
laughed inappropriately
looked at watch

Repeat the demonstration, this time demonstrating active listening. Before asking the children to name the behaviors, ask the speaker how he/she feels this time. Then make the list of active listening *behaviors*, that the children saw in this demonstration. It will probably include such actions as:

turned body toward speaker
looked into speaker's eyes
did not interrupt
had interested expression
smiled

Following the demonstrations, ask the children to pick partners and pair off into dyads. Explain to them that they will be doing a listening exercise in the next ten minutes and that you will give them signals and directions for how to proceed. Then direct them through the following stages:

> First decide who will be A and who will be B. Then for two minutes, beginning at the signal, A will talk to B, telling B anything that he/she would like to say. During this time, B will do all the non-listening behaviors that he/she can think of. At the signal ending the two minutes, a one minute period will begin. During this minute, ***B will listen*** *as* A tells him/her how he/she feels about what just happened. Then, at the signal, for two minutes A will tell B the same thing, or something else, and this time ***B will actively listen*** *to A.*
>
> In the second five minutes of the exercise, the partners will reverse roles. B will talk to A, who in the first two minutes will not listen. Then B will tell A about his/her feelings for one minute. Then B will tell A the same story, or something else, for two minutes and this time A will listen.

An automatic timer will be helpful for signaling the end of time periods for this exercise. When the partners are not listening to each other (four of the ten minutes) the noise level in the room will increase to an amazing degree because they will be trying to get the listener's attention and they will be discharging their frustration almost always by laughing. When the entire exercise has been completed, conduct a class discussion, asking the following questions:

"How did you feel when your partner wouldn't listen to you?"

"How did you feel when your partner did listen?"

"How did you feel when you were not listening to your partner?"

"How did you feel when you did listen to him/her?"

"Were you aware of the changes in the noise level in the room during different parts of the exercise? What were they? What made it so noisy at times?"

"What are some things that you may have learned from the demonstrations and from doing this exercise?"

UNIT V

AWARENESS: IDENTITY

While all of the unit themes and individual topics in this activity guide are designed, in part, to enhance each child's self-knowledge, this matter is important enough to focus on directly. Hence, this unit on identity has been added to this guide.

Everyone searches in their own way for the answer to the question, "Who am I?" There is more to answering this question than what may appear to be a correct response on the surface. To attempt to find the answer each person needs to be in touch with him/herself in terms of outward manifestations such as physical and personality characteristics and cultural influences. We also need to keep in touch with ourselves on the inside by asking ourselves questions, such as: "How do I like to express myself?" "What do I do well?" "How do I react to things?" "What do I value?" "How am I feeling?" and "What kind of person am I becoming?"

Answering questions like these may help an individual to know him/herself at any one time, but all of these factors, as well as outward conditions, are always in a state of flux. Identity, therefore, is never static. The dimension of time causes our identities to actually change from one moment to the next as we grow and develop and respond to a changing world.

An important aspect in the development of identity in children (and for humans of all age groups) refers to this latter factor. Not everyone agrees on how much a person's behavior is determined, or how much they should let it be determined, by the demands of the environment. But probably most people do agree that to some extent everyone is who they are, because of what they *have* to be and do in the world in order to survive and grow physically, socially and psychologically. Therefore, the matter of how we all change from situation to situation and how this can be appropriate at times and self depreciating at others, is brought to the attention of the children in this unit. A child's sense of identity, or, "who I am," may not correspond to the role that he/she is expected to play by some individual, or group. This relates to a variety of factors in a variety of settings. A primary example is the expectations generally placed on children because of their sex. For this reason, topics that relate to this issue are presented for the children to discuss.

These sessions are preceded by a series of topics referring to the wishes and fantasies of children with respect to their identities and a closer look at themselves with respect to their cultural backgrounds and their changing physical and personality characteristics, preferences, perceptions and needs. Other topics are devoted to increasing the children's awareness of some of their strong points and likeable qualities.

The overall purpose of this unit, then, is not to try to supply the complete answer to the question, "Who am I?", but to help each child strengthen his/her own sense of identity in a positive context in the here-and-now. It is also presented to help them understand what some of the factors are that influence their changing selves and how each life situation, like each person, is unique and should be responded to by way of conscious decisions. It is, therefore, our objective to aid children in developing a sense of identity as a person who makes aware, rational choices.

Topics On Identity

"A Name I'd Like to Have"
"If I Were an Animal"
"A Person I'd Like to Be Like"
"I 'See' Things in My Own Way"
"I 'See' Things in My Own Way" (Continued)
"Something I Like About You"
"How Do I Look?"
"Who Am I Culturally?"
"A Group I Like Belonging To"
"Something That I Used to Need That I Don't Need Anymore"
"How I Can Change from One Situation to Another"
"How I Changed to Please Someone (or Some Group) But I Didn't Like That Me"
"Something I Didn't Do Because as a (Boy or Girl) I 'Shouldn't' Have"
"A Time When I Did Something That People of My Sex 'Shouldn't' Do"
"How I Would Like to Be Known by Others"

"A Name I'd Like to Have"

This topic was suggested by a fifth grader. Since our names are one of the most definite things about us it is ironic that we generally have nothing to say about what they should be. Perhaps it is in response to this situation, that most children enjoy fantasizing that they have another name — *one that they pick*.

A great deal of pleasure usually comes from this session. It is a good way to begin focusing on the concept of identity because in an enjoyable context, each child will begin to think about how they are known and how they would like to be known.

Introduce the topic to the children and discuss how our names were given to us by someone else. You may even get into a discussion about how some people have actually changed their names, sometimes going through legal channels to do so. Then ask them:

> *"Have you ever thought about what name you would have chosen for yourself, if the choice had been yours? What name would you have picked?"*

As the children begin to respond, ask them in an open-ended fashion:

> *"Tell us what the name means to you?"*

> *"How do you think you would feel being known by that name?"*

Often someone they admire will have the name they like. It could be someone they know or someone famous that they would like to know, or a character in a book, movie, TV series, etc.

After a review of what each child would like to be named and how they think they would feel having the name, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Did we all choose the names that we told about for the same reasons?*

2. *What were some of the different reasons that you noticed?*

"If I Were an Animal"

Today the children will continue to use their abilities to fantasize by making an even more dramatic choice about their identities. Although the concept may at first be startling, most people enjoy imagining what it would be like not to be human at all, but to be the animal *of their choice* and to tell about how they decided what animal they would be. Through this kind of expression, the teller and listeners are in a unique mind-frame that together they all understand. Enjoyment, and possibly insight, comes from this experience of vivid self-expression.

Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"If you were not a person, but some animal, what animal would you like to be? Tell us what you think it would be like to be the animal of your choice."*

As the children participate, ask them such questions as:

> *"How did you decide what animal you would be?"*
>
> *"How would it feel?"*
>
> *"How would you spend your time?"*
>
> *"What would be the best thing about it?"*
>
> *"When you see a (horse) what kind of feelings do you get?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What similarities and differences did you notice in the animals we named and the feelings we expressed in this session?*

"A Person I'd Like to Be Like"

This is another topic suggested by a fifth grader and comes closer to getting at the heart of the matter of identity. By thinking about someone they admire and respect in some way, the children will focus on what the characteristics and behaviors of that person are. Thus the children are likely to increase their knowledge of what specific things go into being who they want to be.

Tell the children what the topic is and ask them:

> *"Think about someone you would like to be like. It could be someone you know or someone who is famous that you would like to know, or maybe your favorite hero, or heroine from history. Tell us about the person."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How does (did) the person behave toward other people?"*

If the person that they mention is someone they know personally, ask:

> *"How do they behave toward you?"*
>
> *"How do you feel when you are with him/her?"*

These questions are asked in order to bring the kinds of relationships the person has into sharp focus.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *In what ways were the people we said we would like to be like, the same?*
2. *What were some of the feelings that we told about that we have when we are with the people who we would like to be like?*

■ **Important — see top of next page.**

■ Before this session, make preparations for tomorrow's activity by finding a picture to show to the children that depicts at least one thing that is going on that is fairly ambiguous. (A picture from a a book or magazine that is illustrating a fantasy or a mystery story will probably do.) Bring the picture to the circle and show it to the children after today's session, just before they leave the circle. *Do not discuss the picture.* Simply ask the children to write a brief story about what they see in it. Ask them *not* to discuss the picture with each other or to show each other their stories. (Be sure to write a brief story of your own.)

"I 'See' Things in My Own Way"

Everyone perceives the world in their own unique way. Sometimes it is a surprise when we come face to face with this reality — that other people see things differently than we do, but it is something that is useful for us to keep in mind. If we accept this idea, our acceptance is likely to lead to increased respect for others and for ourselves.

Today's session relates to visual perception and continues from the introduction that was made yesterday. It will end with an introduction for tomorrow's session, which relates to their perceptions of something that you will read to them.

As the children prepare to come to the circle, ask them to bring the story they wrote, about the picture you showed them yesterday.

As soon as everyone is seated discuss briefly whether or not we all see things in exactly the same way. Then ask the children to read the stories that they wrote about the things that they saw in the picture.

After everyone has read their story, review by asking the children to tell each other what they perceived in the picture, using the words, "You saw _____ ," "It seemed to you as if _____ ," etc.

Culminate the session by asking:

1. *What were some of the main ways that we perceived what was going on in the picture that were different?*
2. *Were there any similarities?*
3. *Is it okay to be different?*

■ Before the children leave the circle ask them to imagine that they are the writer of an advice column for the school paper. Tell them that you are going to read a letter from someone who wants some advice. Then ask them to go to their desks and write a response, without discussing the letter or their responses with each other. (Be sure to write a letter of your own, too.) Then read the following letter to the children:

Dear AAA Advice Services:

I have a problem. Everytime I go to bed I get the hiccups. I've tried lots of things but nothing works. Why do I get the hiccups everytime I go to bed? How can I get rid of them? I need my rest.

Signed,

Sleepy

"I 'See' Things in My Own Way (Continued)"

Today's session culminates the focus on how each person perceives, and reacts to, things in their own way.

As the children prepare for the session ask them to bring their letters to the circle which they have prepared in response to the letter requesting advice that you read to them yesterday.

Begin the session by discussing briefly how we are finding out that every person perceives in their own unique way. Then ask them to read their letters of advice that they have written to "Sleepy." Expect a good deal of joviality during this phase of the session.

Review by asking the children to tell each other what they heard each other read from their letters that told what they thought caused the hiccuping and what they thought would be a solution to the problem.

Culminate by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the main differences that we thought of that were causing Sleepy's hiccups?*

2. *What were some of the different solutions that we thought of?*

■ (Before the children leave the circle, be particularly sure to tell them that tomorrow's topic will be, "Something I Like About You." Urge them to start thinking now about something that they like about each of the other circle members.)

"Something I Like About You"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

The purpose of today's session is to give each child the opportunity to hear at least one positive statement made to him/her by a peer and/or by you, thereby increasing their awareness that they are a person with likeable qualities. It will also offer each child the opportunity to say something that is positive to someone else.

Begin the session by explaining briefly to the children what the format will be for the session. Then speak directly to one of the children saying his/her name and tell the child something that you like about his/her personality. (Example: *Martin, I like the way you make friends so easily. I can tell that you like other people and that's something I like a lot about you.*)

Then ask the children:

"Would someone else like to name someone and tell that person something they like about him or her?"

As the children do this, urge them to choose someone who has not been chosen yet. When every child who wants one has had a turn and some children have not had a positive statement made to them, tell the group,

*"Now let's **all** think of something to tell (David) that we like about him."*

Allow the group to freely make as many statements as they can to the child, telling him/her things that they like about him/her.

In the review, ask each child to tell the person who said something positive to them what they said. (Example: Martin would say, *"Mr. (or Mrs.) _____, you said that you like the way I make friends and the way I like other people a lot. That's something you like about me!*)

Culminate by asking the children:

1. *How does it make you feel to hear someone tell you something that they like about you in front of a group?*

2. *How does it feel to say something to someone about what you like about them?*

Add that each of us should make it a point to remember what was said to us and we should remind ourselves often that we have these positive qualities.

"How Do I Look"

(Due to its fairly complex nature, it's recommended that this activity be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Each person is more than what their appearance tells about them, but today the children will begin to focus directly on their individual identities by discussing their unique physical characteristics in a positive context.

Bring a mirror to the session. Begin by discussing how each person is unique and beautiful in their own way, like snowflakes. Even identical twins are not really identical; they only look alike on the outside. Then tell the group what the session will consist of.

Begin by looking in the mirror and describing what you see. By way of example, (*"I have long brown hair and hazel eyes. My nose is long and I have olive skin."*) Then tell about any other physical characteristics that you might focus on at the time. (*"I am short; I am strong, etc.*) Tell your sex (*"I am a woman or a man."*) *And then tell the group about one or two things that you particularly like about your physical self* (***"I like my long hair and my skin."***).

Then guide the children through these steps. Make sure that everyone understands that they should tell about what they observe and like about themselves *without any negative comments*. Ask them to speak in as pleased a tone as possible. Expect the giggling and laughing that will naturally result.

Review by asking the children to tell what the physical characteristics were that each child said he liked about him/herself.

Culminate the session by asking:

1. *Why do you think that it is sometimes hard for people to say what they like about their physical characteristics in front of a group?*

"Who Am I Culturally?"

(Due to its fairly complex nature, it is recommended that this activity be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Although there is general disagreement relating to how much influence culture plays, or should play, in determining our behavior, beliefs, values and attitudes, most people would probably agree that culture does play an important role. Today we will focus on cultural influences in the same positive, accepting way that we have been focusing on the children's experiences and feelings. *Each person will tell about something that they like about themselves that is a part of them as a result of their culture.*

The discussion of culture is important to all children. Those who are members of minority cultures are very aware of who they are. To experience appreciative, respectful listening as they tell about something that they like about themselves culturally will be a positive influence. Children of the majority culture often do not focus on themselves in this way. A session of this nature then, is likely to increase their awareness that they are a member of a cultural group with its own language, customs, music, beliefs, etc., and that everyone in the world is not guided by these same cultural influences.

Start the session by briefly discussing what culture is and how it influences us. Then take your turn first. Focus on the past and on the present. Tell briefly about the national backgrounds of your parents and grandparents (possibly going beyond that point) and then tell the group what country you are a citizen of. By way of example: (*"My mother's parents were born in Mexico and my father's mother was born in England and his father was born in Spain. My parents were both born in the United States and are citizens of this country. That makes me a citizen of this country, too."*) ***Then tell the group something that you like about yourself that is a part of you because of these cultural influences.*** (Example: *"I get a special feeling when I hear Mexican music. It is so rich and beautiful, like the whole culture. I feel proud when I hear it and when I dance to it. And I'm glad that I can speak Spanish. I am glad that I am a citizen of this country too and that I can speak English."*)

In the event that some children have difficulty isolating something in their minds that they like about themselves culturally, ask them to name something that they like about their culture. Another possibility would be to mention something that you know about them that has to do with their culture, or a positive quality that they possess that relates to their background in some way. Tell

about it briefly, checking with the child to be sure that you are correct, and then tell how much you like it.

Review by asking the children to tell what the qualities were that each child said he/she liked in him/herself as a result of cultural influences.

Culminate by asking:

1. *Why do you think that it is a good thing for us to be proud of our cultural backgrounds and present cultures?*

"A Group I Like Belonging To"

An important part in how we identify ourselves has to do with groups to which we belong. Most people join groups that they feel comfortable being a part of and to which they feel a sense of belonging. Today the children will have an opportunity to talk about a group that they like belonging to. (Some may mention the circle session group.) Begin the session by clarifying the topic, as follows:

> *"Think about some group that you belong to that you like. You could tell about some kind of formal club or organization or maybe just a neighborhood group of friends."*

To help the children express the feelings they have about belonging to the group that they tell about, ask:

> *"How did you feel at first when you joined the group?"*
>
> *"How do you feel about belonging to the group now?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Why do you think people join groups, clubs and organizations?*

"Something That I Used to Need That I Don't Need Anymore"

One positive way of focusing on our identities is to give attention to the area of past dependencies. As we grow and develop and become more "in charge" of our lives, we cast off old dependencies, taking more personal responsibility to meet our own needs. Today the children will give their direct attention to this area.

Begin by clarifying the topic. Tell the children:

> *"Think about something that you used to need that you don't need anymore, like a life jacket in a swimming pool, or it might be some person that you used to have some kind of need for, whom you don't anymore, like a babysitter. Tell us about something that you used to need that you don't need anymore."*

When it is your turn, you may tell about something that you needed recently that you don't need now, or something you used to need as a child that at some point you stopped needing. As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How does it make you feel when you realize that there are things that you don't need anymore because you are growing and developing on your own?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What were the main feelings that we expressed about not needing certain things anymore?*

"How I Can Change from One Situation to Another"

All human beings are equipped with the facility to adapt and change to the demands of various situations. Today the children will discuss how they are able to do this. They will focus on how exterior circumstances, such as expectations from others, influence these changes and how they feel about these circumstances and their own behavior. (In subsequent sessions the group will discuss how at times the changes we make can be very appropriate and at other times they can lead us into certain kinds of difficulties. But today we will focus mainly on the fact that all of us do have the ability to change our behavior to the needs of various situations.)

Briefly, discuss with the children how people can change their behavior from one situation to another. To clarify the topic ask the children:

> *"Have you ever been in a place doing a certain thing and then later on found yourself in another place and noticed that you were behaving in a very different way in order to meet the needs or demands of the person, or group, that you were with? Tell us about the two situations and how you behaved differently in each one."*

Be very sure not to place any moral judgments on the behavior that is described or allow any of the children to do this to each other. Ask each of the children as they describe the situations they were in:

> *"How did you feel in each situation?"*
>
> *"How did you feel about your behavior?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What do you think would happen if people didn't have this ability to change their behavior from one situation to another?*
2. *What are some of the things about this ability of ours that you think are good?*
3. *Are there any disadvantages?*

"How I Changed to Please Someone (or Some Group) But I Didn't Like That Me"

This topic deals with some of the complexities involved in changing from one situation to another. Today the children will focus on how they changed to please someone or some group but didn't feel "right" or natural about the way they were behaving. Sometimes when we adjust our behavior to meet the needs of some person or group it is a very appropriate thing to do, even when it feels strange, so we do it anyway. Other times it can lead to feelings of self-disrespect, depending on the situation.

This session hopes to point out to the children that it is important to be flexible and to realize that there are no hard and fast rules about exactly how they should behave in each and every life situation because each one is different and needs a conscious decision from the child with respect to his/her behavior. Discuss these ideas with the children, then ask them:

> *"Think of a time when you were behaving in a certain way in order to please someone or a group, but you did not feel good about yourself as you were doing it. Tell us about it."*

As the children describe these situations, ask them:

> *"How did you feel inside?"*
>
> *"How do you feel about it now?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Do you think it's a good idea to pay attention to the feelings we have about ourselves when we do certain things?*

2. *Do you think you should try to keep from doing things that give you bad feelings about yourself?*

"Something I Didn't Do Because as a (Boy or Girl) I 'Shouldn't' Have"

(It is recommended that this session be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

The objectives of today's session are: (1) To give the children the opportunity to increase their awareness of how in some ways society generally expects and appreciates certain behaviors and attitudes in individuals because of their sex and generally does not reward certain other behaviors and attitudes in individuals, again because of their sex. (2) To help children realize that sometimes it is appropriate to comply with these kinds of expectations, but sometimes it may not be, because their personal needs and wants may not be met and opportunities might be missed.

Discuss with the children some of the specific ways that boys and girls are generally expected to behave by many people and groups and how these behaviors are generally appreciated when they occur in a child of the sex that is expected to behave that way. (Examples: Girls should enjoy learning to cook and should get to be good at it. Boys should be interested in construction, Math and Science and should never cry because that wouldn't be "manly".) Many behaviors are expected and appreciated in both boys and girls, but today the focus is on how there are certain distinct differences in the standards that are generally placed on the behaviors and attitudes of boys and on the behaviors and attitudes of girls.

Begin this session by asking the children:

> *"Girls, think about some of the things that girls generally aren't supposed to do, and boys, think about some of the things that boys generally aren't supposed to do. Both boys and girls, now think of something that you wanted, or needed, to to do, but you didn't do, because maybe you would have 'felt funny' or you might have gotten teased or criticized. If you have thought of something like this that you didn't let yourself do, we would like to hear about it."*

Discuss together how at times it is appropriate to behave as girls or boys are usually expected to, but how at other times it isn't necessary. Opportunities are lost if we don't try some of the things that we are interested in that are usually the things people of the opposite sex do.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Do girls always feel like behaving the way girls are generaly expected to behave?*

2. *Do boys always feel like behaving the way they are expected to behave?*

3. *Why is it hard to go against these kinds of expectations?*

"A Time When I Did Something That People of My Sex 'Shouldn't' Do"

Today's session follows closely after the preceding session entitled, *"Something I Didn't Do Because as a (Boy or Girl) I 'Shouldn't' Have"*. In the former session the children focused on the difficulty that they often experience when they want to do something that usually isn't expected of someone of their own sex — so they didn't do it. Today the children will tell about a time when they *did* do what they wanted to do, regardless of how strange it may have felt, or how much pressure was put on them not to. (Often this pressure takes the form of being teased by one's peers.) The emphasis is on how everyone is capable of going against this kind of pressure, but sometimes, it does take courage. Begin the session by clarifying the topic to the children. Then ask them:

"Have you ever gone ahead and done something that people of your sex aren't 'supposed' to do? Tell us about a time when you were able to do this despite 'funny feelings' inside yourself or being afraid of being teased or criticized."

As the children participate, remind them that we don't need to know who the person may have been who teased or criticized them. Ask each child:

"How did you feel at first, and later on, and now, about doing it?"

"How did other people react?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *If you are a boy, do you always* ***have*** *to behave the way boys are generally expected to behave?*

2. *If you are a girl, do you always* ***have*** *to behave the way girls are generally expected to behave?*

3. *Are there times when it might be best to behave the way people expect you to behave because of being a boy or because of being a girl?*

"How I Would Like to Be Known by Others"

Everyone has some ideas about how they would like others to see them, or how they would like other people to feel about them. The children will end this unit by talking about the kinds of qualities and characteristics they would like to be known to have.

Begin the session by telling the children what the topic is and possibly taking your turn first, if necessary. Tell the group one or two qualities that you think are valuable that you would like people to think are qualities of yours. Then ask the children:

"Have you ever thought about how you would like to be known by others? Tell us about the kinds of things you would like for other people to know about you."

As the children take their turns, ask them:

"How do you think it would make you feel if you knew that people saw you as (an honest) person?"

"How do you feel toward people who have these qualities?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What were the characteristics and qualities that seemed to be mentioned the most in this session that we found to be valuable?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO IDENTITY

Art: The Way We See Each Other

Have the children draw names from a box. Each child should draw one name and then make a picture of the child whose name he/she drew. Ask them to try to keep the identity of the child's name they drew a secret while they do the art work. Urge them to do their very best to make the picture look like the person whose name they drew. At the end of the activity, have the children put the pictures they drew on their desks. Allow them to mill around the desks until they find the one that they are sure is a picture of them. They may keep the pictures of themselves that were drawn by the other children.

"All About Me"

Reproduce a copy of the following exercise for each child in the class, or give each of the children a piece of paper. If you choose to pass out paper, ask the children to write "All About Me" at the top. Then ask them to write completions for the following sentences on their papers. (You may either write these sentences on the board or dictate them to the children. They need only write their completions on their papers.)

If I were a tree, (examples: fir, willow, redwood, etc.) I would be a (1) _____ , because (2) _____ .

If I were a natural resource, (examples: mountain, river, forest, etc.) I would be a (3) _____ , because (4) _____ .

If I were a car, (examples: sportscar, Rolls Royce, van, etc.) I would be a (5) _____ , because (6) _____ .

If I were a fish (examples: goldfish, shark, flying fish, etc.) I would be a (7) _____ , because (8) _____ .

If I were a weather condition, (examples: a sunny day, a thunderhead, sleet, etc.) I would be a (9) _____ , because (10) _____ .

If I were something in outer space, (examples: the sun, the milky way, pluto, etc.) I would be (11) _____ , because (12) _____ .

Ten things that I like about myself are: _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ .

Read what the children have written and comment positively to each one confidentially in writing. Because this is an awareness activity and not a written language lesson, do not "correct" these papers with respect to punctuation, grammar, or spelling, etc. The children may share what they have written with each other during some free period if they wish to.

Art: This Is Me

Have the children work in groups of two, using large sheets of butcher paper. One person lies on the paper while another draws the shape of his/her body around him/her. Then each person cuts out his or her shape and fills it in with characteristics and colors which represent his/her physical self. These may be taped to the classroom walls and ceiling, put in the hall outside of the classroom, or taken home.

Written Report: My Cultural Identity

Ask the children to select one (or more) of the countries their forefathers were born in, or the country of their own citizenship, and to prepare a report about the culture of that country using available reference materials in the classroom and/or school library and most importantly, information they receive from their parents and relatives through interviews. Ask them to write something in their report about how these cultural influences might be present in some form in their lives today.

Music Appreciation: Culture Represented in Melodies and Lyrics

Obtain recordings of music from as many countries and cultures that the children base their reports on as possible (see above activity) and play them for the class. Appreciatively discuss the beautiful aspects of each type of music. Discuss other features, such as the language, dances, costumes and literature of the children's present cultures and cultural backgrounds in a positive vein.

Music, Singing, Creative Dramatics and Puppets: Messages and Ideas via Songs and Stories

Play the album, "Free to Be . . . You and Me"[1] for the class and discuss the meaning of each song and story as a class, or in small group discussions (not necessarily circle sessions). Various songs and stories on the album relate closely to Identity. Others relate to the units, Helping, Friendship and Exploring Feelings in this guide.

As a class, learn the songs that the children particularly enjoy and sing them frequently as class songs.

Some of the children may be encouraged to practice and present to the class their own dramatic rendition of some of the songs and stories on the record in the form of record pantomimes.

Puppets may also be created, a puppet theatre constructed, and the puppeteers may have their puppets perform a variety of songs and stories as the record supplies the music and possibly some of the story lines. (The children should be encouraged to create the scripts themselves.) Invite parents and other classes to the performance.

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[1] "Free to Be . . . You and Me" was recorded by Marlo Thomas and Friends, Bell Records, 1972. A book with the same title, which corresponds to the record, is also available. McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.: New York, 1973.

UNIT VI

SOCIAL INTERACTION: HELPING

Helping is a delicate issue with very few, if any, hard and fast rules. Nearly everyone has had an experience in which they needed help and didn't want to admit it, or received some help they didn't want, or received help and felt very grateful for it. Most of us have also been in a position wherein we have wanted to help someone, but didn't know how or we weren't asked. Sometimes we have hesitated and at other times we have gone ahead and then learned that either action had the potential for positive or negative feelings in the people involved. Another variable is the "wanting to". When people do not wish to help, still other feelings may result. Helping, therefore, is not a simple, altruistic behavior that is "always the right thing to do."

As the Human Development Program progresses, the children are trained to lead their own circle sessions. When they begin to undertake this responsibility, it is often tempting for the other children to "coach" or "help" the child leader. For this reason, the new ground rule is instituted which states that the children who are participating are expected to fully respect the leadership position of the child leader by not reminding him/her what to do next or to interfere in any other way with his/her leadership unless they are asked to do so by the child leader.

This unit is offered in part, as a means for reinforcing this new ground rule. By becoming aware of how they have felt as a person struggling with a task or problem, and how they have felt as a potential helper, the children will have more understanding of the complexities in this matter of helping and hopefully, more flexible behavior toward it.

Topics on Helping:

"Why Do You Think People Often Like to Be Helpful?"

"I Helped Someone Who Wanted My Help"

"Someone Helped Me When I Wanted to Be Helped"

"I Got Some Help I Didn't Want"

"I Wanted to Help Someone, but They Didn't Want Me to"

"A Time When I Helped Without Being Asked"

"I Asked Someone If I Could Help Them"

"I Wanted to Help but I Didn't Know How"

"I Didn't Want to Ask for Help"

"I Asked for Help When I Needed It"

"I Helped Someone Even Though I Didn't Feel Like It"

"Why Do You Think People Often Like to Be Helpful?"

This topic, which requests an opinion from the children, is presented at the beginning of this unit to orient them to the subject of helping. Most people do like to experience themselves as being helpful at least some of the time, but helping, as has been previously pointed out, is not a simple matter. Whether to help or not, or whether to ask for help or not, are some of the questions involved. Today the children will discuss the good feelings which usually result from the act of willing helpfulness. Begin the session by asking them:

"Why do you think people often like to be helpful?"

As the children participate, ask them:

"What kind of feelings do you get when you have done a good job of helping someone who appreciated your help?"

Some of the children may offer a personal experience and tell about the feelings which resulted from it. Any such statements indicate that the children have personally incorporated the main intent behind the circle session process, which is a credit to the leadership they have experienced.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Does helping always make everyone involved feel good?*

"I Helped Someone Who Wanted My Help"

In today's and tomorrow's sessions, we will focus on the good feelings which can result from appropriate helping behaviors, before we begin to examine the complexities. As was discussed yesterday, helping and being helped can be a very satisfying experience for everyone concerned.

Review briefly with the children what was discussed yesterday and then ask them:

"Think about a time when you helped someone who wanted your help. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did it make you feel to be helpful?"

"How do you think the other person felt?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Who usually feels good when one person helps another?*

"Someone Helped Me When I Wanted to be Helped"

This session explores the opposite side of the coin from yesterday's session. Now the children will think about how it feels to be the person who was helped when they wanted it, by remembering a time when this happened to them.

Briefly discuss yesterday's session and then ask the children:

"Think about a time when you were the person who wanted some help and received it from someone else. Tell us about what happened."

As the children tell about an event of this nature, ask them:

"How did you feel as the person on the receiving end of the help?"

"How do you think it made the person who helped you feel?"

Folowing a brief review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *How did the people who helped us seem to feel about getting a chance to be helpful?*

2. *In what way did we do something nice for them?*

"I Got Some Help I Didn't Want"

This seems to happen to everyone to some degree. Children are especially sensitive to what they can and cannot do and often resent attempts on the part of someone else to do something for them that they have learned to do for themselves. In many cases when children are struggling with a task, they are going through important, self-stimulated learning experiences, and *need* to be involved in the struggle. There is a fine line in these cases when someone is struggling with a task, when doing something for them may be very helpful or not helpful at all. As the song "Helping"[1] points out:

"Some kind of help is the kind of help that helping's all about,
And some kind of help is the kind of help we all can do without."

Then ask the children:

"Have you ever received some help you didn't want? Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel at the time?"

"Did your 'helper' seem to realize that you did not want his/her help?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Is there anything wrong with feeling annoyed if someone helps you when you don't want it?*

2. *Why do you think people sometimes try to help someone when the person doesn't want help?*

3. *What do you think is the best thing to do about it when someone starts to help you and you'd rather do it yourself?*

"I Wanted to Help Someone, but They Didn't Want Me to"

How often we hear ourselves or someone else, in an injured tone, exclaim, "But I was only trying to help!" Today the children will discuss how it feels to be the one who wants to be the helper when the person who seems to need help doesn't want it.

Briefly discuss the topic with the children and then ask them:

"Think about a time when you saw someone who seemed to need help so you decided to help him or her, but then you found out that your help wasn't wanted. Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did it make you feel to find out that your help wasn't wanted?"

"How did the other person seem to be feeling?"

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[1] "Helping" was written by Shel Silverstein, sung by Tom Smothers and recorded in the album entitled, "Free to Be . . . You and Me." The album was recorded by Marlo Thomas and Friends, Bell Records, 1972. (A book with the same title which corresponds to the record, is also available.)

Following a brief review, concentrating mainly on the feelings reported, rather than the content of each child's story, culminate by asking the children:

1. *If someone doesn't want your help are they rejecting you as a person?*

2. *If not, what is it that they are rejecting?*

3. *Is there anything wrong with their feeling of annoyance?*

4. *What do you think would be the best thing to do if you see someone who seems to need help and you would like to help them?*

"A Time When I Helped Without Being Asked"

As we have seen, sometimes our help is wanted and sometimes it isn't. If someone asks us to help them, then we know they want it, but sometimes they may want it and not ask. Helping someone in these instances, therefore, is taking a risk. The person may be appreciative or they may not be.

Discuss these ideas with the children and ask them:

"Have you ever seen someone who seemed to need some help but they didn't ask for help so you went ahead and helped them anyway without discussing the matter with them first. Tell us about what happened."

It will be likely that in some of the cases the outcome may have been positive, but for others it may have been similar to the outcomes discussed yesterday. As the children participate, ask them:

"How did the person respond to your help?"

"How did you respond to their response?"

Discuss how helping someone without discussing it with them first is a risk-taking situation with very definite possibilities for positive, as well as negative, outcomes.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *If you are uncertain about whether or not to help someone and they don't ask for your help, what could you do?*

2. *Is helping without being asked always the "wrong" thing to do?*

"I Asked Someone If I Could Help Them"

Today the children will report on what happened when they asked someone if they could help before starting to do so.

Discuss with them some of the complexities that we have been discovering in this business of helping and how important it is to ask someone if you may help them before doing so. Begin the session by asking:

"Think about a time when someone seemed to need some help and you asked them if you could help them. Tell us about the situation and what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel before you asked the person if they could use some help?"

"How did you feel afterward?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Is it easy to ask someone who needs help if you can help them?*

2. *Do you think it's usually easier for the person who needs help to ask for it, or, for you to ask them?*

"I Wanted to Help but I Didn't Know How"

Sometimes our help is desired and we are willing to help, but we don't know what to do. In these cases we can keep silent and do nothing or ask the person in need of help what we could do to help them. As we are beginning to see, open communication can alleviate many difficulties before they actually become problems. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Have you ever seen someone who seemed to need and want some help and you wanted to help him or her, but you didn't know how? Tell us about the situation."

As the children respond, ask them:

"How did you feel when you were in this situation?"

"What did you do about it?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Should we always expect ourselves to know exactly what to do and how to do it?*

2. *What would probably be a good thing to do when we want to help someone but we don't know how?*

3. *If someone wants to help you and you need and want their help, but you can tell they don't know how, what could you do?*

"I Didn't Want to Ask for Help"

(It is recommended that this session be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Sometimes we don't want to ask for help because we don't want to admit that we need it, not even to ourselves. And sometimes we feel very proud about "going it alone". While this is a normal need, to prove our capabilities to ourselves, it can sometimes be overdone, as we see in some people's martyr behavior. It is easy to identify this kind of behavior in others, but today we will take a look at ourselves, as no one really can change us, except ourselves. Before we can make these changes in our behavior, we must first become aware. Discuss these ideas briefly with the children. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you didn't want anyone (possibly even yourself) to know that you needed help. Tell us about the situation."

It may be a good idea to take your turn first today. Tell how you were feeling inside, especially about yourself when this happened to you. This kind of self-disclosure proves that you are capable of change and growth. By looking back on behavior like this, and perhaps even laughing at yourself (not in a derogatory sense), you are demonstrating to the children how they too can make a big step

toward becoming more self-knowing individuals, who are then more able to choose future behavior that is appropriate.

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel when this happened to you?"

"What did you do?"

(Sometimes the reason we might have for not wanting to ask for help is because we are afraid that the person asked may not want to help us, as tomorrow's session may indicate.)

Be sure to express your appreciation to the children who participate. It is likely that some of them may prefer to listen and think over the concepts being discussed.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Why do you think it's hard sometimes for people to ask for help?*
2. *What good, if any, does it do us to discuss this topic?*

"I Asked for Help When I Needed It"

Today the children will discuss how they felt and what happened when they asked for help when they needed it. Discuss with them how it sometimes takes courage for us to admit being in need of help. It also takes courage because we might be refused, which would probably make us feel bad. For these reasons, people are often hesitant to ask for the help they need. Discuss these ideas with the children and then ask them:

"Tell us about a time when you asked for help when you needed it. What were the results?"

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel when you asked for help?"

"How did you feel about the outcome?"

For some, the outcome may have been a very positive experience, but for others, negative. Discuss how either outcome is always possible depending on who is involved and the circumstances.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *It's hard sometimes to ask for help. How does it make you feel when someone you ask for help doesn't want to help you?*
2. *If this happens, is it easy to ask the next time, even if it is someone else?*
3. *Should you ask someone again anyway?*
4. *Why or why not?*
5. *If someone asks you for help, what then?*

"I Helped Someone Even Though I Didn't Feel Like It"

Yesterday we talked about how we take risks when we ask for help. We might receive it, or we might be refused, which would probably make us feel bad. We also considered in the summary "If someone asks you for help, what then?"

Begin today's session by briefly discussing these ideas. Then, to be more specific, ask the children:

"Have you ever been asked to help when you didn't want to, but you did it anyway? Tell us about the situation and what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel at first?"

"How did the other person seem to be feeling?"

"How did you feel after you finished helping?"

Again, expect diversity. Some may have helped because they didn't want the person to feel bad and after helping, they felt good about themselves. Others may have felt that they had better do it, or be punished in some way, and then felt resentful. Discuss how circumstances, and the way we are asked to help, can make a big difference.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the things that you may have learned from these sessions about helping?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO HELPING:

Communicating Openly about Helping

Ask the children to start being alert to opportunities for helping each other in the classroom and on the playground. Urge them to ask each other for help and to give it when asked. Urge them also to ask others if they would like help, (if the person seems to need it) and in what way they can help (if they are unsure of how to proceed.)

Art and Creative Writing: How I Helped Someone

Ask the children to make a picture illustrating how they helped someone who needed and wanted their help and to write a story about it. This activity can be related to any of the other topics in this unit also.

Music: A Song about Helping

Play the song, "Helping"[1] from the album "Free to Be . . . You and Me" and discuss its meaning. Play it again at various times until the children have learned it so that it may become a class song.

Creative Dramatics: Actions, Reactions and Feelings

Ask a number of children who have discussed the topics on helping in the circle session to create several dramas for the class illustrating what can happen when:

1. One person helps another who needs it and wants it.
2. One person tries to help another who doesn't want it.
3. Someone wants to help but doesn't know how.
4. One person asks another for help and gets it.
5. One person asks another if he/she can help him/her.
6. Someone is refused the help they ask for.

The children may pantomime the tasks and struggles for which they need help and may talk to the audience to let it be known what they are thinking and feeling at various points in each drama. After each dramatic presentation, discuss with the class how they would have felt as each character in each situation.

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[1] The album entitled, "Free To Be . . . You and Me," was recorded by Marlo Thomas and friends, Bell Records, 1972.

UNIT VII

MASTERY: ENDEAVORS

Expending effort is increasingly becoming a significant part of the fifth grader's life. The children with whom we work will continue to do their academic work at school and will more readily take on other responsibilities and jobs at home and elsewhere.

Working brings about many feelings in people. On the negative side, we sometimes feel bored, overwhelmed, or that the job is drudgery. Positive feelings include zestful involvement, pride, and feelings of effectiveness. Other matters of concern to us all that relate to work, are the relationship between the "boss" and the workers, and the use of earnings. This unit provides the children with a chance to talk about these issues with each other.

By discussing the various topics relating to endeavors, the children will focus on jobs that they do at present, ones that they like and ones that they don't like. They will talk about the kind of work they think might be rewarding to them as adults, that might in some way relate to jobs that they like to do now. Through positive modes of interaction, the children will have a number of opportunities to be validated by one another and to validate themselves, with respect to their effectiveness. Thus the critical area of self-worth will be addressed with respect to the children's ability to accomplish their endeavors. They will also be given a chance to develop increased awareness of their interests, preferences, and capabilities, and will deal with issues relating to responsible competence. All of these matters are basic to intelligent career planning and are emphasized by educators who believe that there is more to career education than simply testing young people in high schools and informing them as to the career choices that exist for adults.

An additional word should be added respecting your participation in the sessions. By hearing you talk about your feelings regarding endeavors that you are involved in, the children may begin to realize more fully that you too have a variety of feelings, just like they do, about doing work. When the topics relating to future jobs are discussed, it will be very eye-opening for them to hear you relate things that you look forward to accomplishing. The message is, "Age is a state of mind. I may be an adult, but I don't stop growing."

Topics On Endeavors

"A Job I Like"

"A Job I Don't Like"

"Something I Worked Hard At"

"I Liked a Job Because I Could Do It"

"I Did It Because It Needed to Be Done"

"Something That You Do Well"

"Something I Do Well That I Like to Do"

"I Did it All By Myself"

"I Accomplished Something at School"

"A Time When I Was the Boss"

"A Time When Somebody Else Was Boss"

"Something I Did (or Made) That I'm Proud Of"

"A Time When I Worked Too Much (or Too Hard)"

"A Way I Earned Something and What I Did with It"

"A Time When I Traded with Somebody"

"Something Worth Saving Money For"

"Something That I Want to Do (or Make) Someday, That I Haven't Done Yet"

"Something That I Like to Do Now That Could Relate to My Job When I'm an Adult"

"A Job I Like"

Today the children will have an opportunity to talk about some of the kinds of jobs that they do that they enjoy. Through this discussion, they are given the opportunity to find out that everyone does not enjoy doing the same job. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think of a job, some kind of work, that you have done that you enjoyed and tell us about it. We would like to hear."

As the children begin to participate, be sure to ask them:

"How does it feel when you (deliver newspapers)?"

"How does it feel when you get the job done?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Does everyone enjoy doing the very same jobs?*
2. *What are some of the similarities and differences in the preferences of the people in our group with respect to jobs that we like?*

"A Job I Don't Like"

Today the children will focus their attention on jobs they have done that they did not enjoy. Although there may be some concensus about general kinds of work, they will learn that everyone does not dislike the very same job. Begin the discussion by asking the children:

"Have you ever done a job that you didn't like? Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you feel when you (rake leaves)?

"How do you feel when the job is done?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Do all of us dislike the very same kind of work:*
2. *What are some of the similarities and differences that you noticed between us, with respect to jobs that we do not like?*

"Something I Worked Hard At"

Today the children will continue their discussions of jobs and how they feel toward doing work. The objective for this session is to give them a chance to describe something *that they put a lot of effort into*, and to discuss the various feelings that resulted. Begin the participation phase by asking the children:

> *"Think about a time when you worked at some kind of job or project very hard. Tell us what it was and how you did it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel when you were (planting all the seeds in your garden)?"*
>
> *"How do you feel about it now?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking:

1. *What were the things that caused us to have good feelings that we told about?*
2. *What caused the negative feelings?*
3. *How do most of us feel now about looking back on something that we worked hard at?*

"I Liked A Job Because I Could Do It"

Today the children will discuss how jobs are often enjoyable for people when they aren't too difficult. Begin the discussion by asking the children:

> *"Think of a time when you recently were doing a job and it was something that you could do rather well, so you enjoyed it. Tell the group about what it was."*

In the participation phase, ask the children:

> *"How did you feel when you were (washing the windows)?"*
>
> *"How did you feel when you got the job done?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *If you are asking a person who is younger than you are, to do a job, what might be a good thing to keep in mind?*
2. *Can you think of any jobs that aren't enjoyable for you because they aren't challenging enough?*

"I Did It Because I Needed To Be Done"

Very often people do jobs simply because they need to be done. If the job that needs to be done is enjoyable so much the better, but sometimes this isn't possible. Today the children will discuss this reality. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Did you ever find yourself doing a job, not because you really liked doing it, or maybe not because anybody asked you, but just because it needed to be done. Tell us about what the job was and how you did it."*

As each child participates, ask:

"How did you feel as you (shoveled the snow)?"

"As you look back on what you did, how do you feel about it right now?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Who are some people that you can think of, who do a lot of jobs simply because they need to be done?*

■ (Be sure to announce tomorrow's topic, "Something That You Do Well," and ask the children to start thinking about some of the things that the other group members do well.)

"Something That You Do Well"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Today the children will have an opportunity to give and receive feedback to one another about jobs that they have noticed that they do well. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think of something that you have noticed that someone in the group does well."

Then ask them to look at the person and say:

"(Child's name), I have noticed something you do well. It is . . . "

To get the ball rolling, it would probably be a good idea for you to take your turn first, naming a child and telling him/her about something that you have seen the child do well.

As each child is told by another, about something that he/she does well, ask the child:

"How does it make you feel (to know that Abe thinks you are good at being a team captain)?"

Discuss how, at first, it may make us feel somewhat embarrassed to receive this kind of validation in front of everybody, but most people seem to appreciate hearing it just the same.

As the children participate, encourage them to make their positive statements to someone who has not as yet been chosen. When every child who wishes to speak has had a turn, check around the circle and find out who has not as yet been chosen. For these children, ask the group:

"Who will tell (Tom) something that he does well?"

Call on a number of children to freely mention things that come to mind. Make a statement of your own to each of these children too. Continue to do this until every child has heard at least one validating statement from another group member about something that they do well.

Following a review, in which each child looks at the group member who validated him/her and tells the group member, *"You said that I (am a good team captain)."*

Culminate this session by asking the children:

1. *If someone tells you about something that you do well, how does it make you feel at first and then after a little while?*

2. *How is it probably going to make them feel if you tell them things that you have noticed that they do well?*

"Something I Do Well That I Like To Do"

Yesterday the children validated each other. Today they will validate themselves by verbally "owning" something that they do well. They will also be given the opportunity, via the content of the session, to gain increased awareness of their personal competencies, interests, and preferences. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"When we think carefully to ourselves, every one of us knows about something that we do well. Today we will encourage each other to speak very positively about* ***ourselves*** *in this session. Tell us about something that you know that you can do well."*

As each child participates, ask:

> *"What kind of feeling do you get from knowing that you are able to (take care of animals) well?"*
>
> *"How do you feel telling us about it in this circle?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Is it generally easy for us to say positive things about ourselves in a group?*
2. *Why or why not?*
3. *Are you glad that we did it?*

"I Did It All By Myself"

This is an important topic for just about everybody. As they grow and develop, self-sufficiency and independence become important issues in the lives of children. Today they will continue to validate themselves, as they did yesterday, by telling the group about some kind of job or accomplishment that they did without assistance from anyone else. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think of a job that you have done recently that you did all by yourself. Tell us what the job was and how you felt when you started doing it."*

During the participation phase, ask the children:

> *"How did you feel when you got the job done?"*
>
> *"How do you feel, knowing that you can do things all by yourself?"*

Discuss how good people feel when they are proud of themselves. Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Did most of us seem to have similar feelings as a result of getting a job done all by ourselves?*

"I Accomplished Something At School"

Since school is such an important arena in the lives of children, this topic will be important to them. Today they will have the opportunity to talk about "jobs" (projects, tasks, assignments, etc.), that they have done at school that were successful. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about a job that you have done recently at school that you did well. It could have been a project, a task, or an assignment that you worked on, or possibly some kind of job that you did, such as cleaning an area of the classroom, or helping the secretary in the school office. Tell us about how you did it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did it feel to accomplish (the arrangement of an interest center)?"

Focus the discussion on how important it is to all of us to be aware of our successes and capabilities, even if we "feel" like we're bragging when we tell about them.
Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some interesting things about this session that you noticed that you would like to mention?*

"A Time When I Was The Boss"

Children, like everyone else, are keenly aware of who is in charge of each and every situation. Sometimes they have opportunities to be the leader, or "boss", (such as leading circle sessions), and these experiences are very important ones for them. Today they will have the opportunity to discuss the positive aspects of being "the one in charge" and also the reality that very often challenging responsibilities accompany the role. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think of a time when there was some kind of situation where several people were together, trying to do something and you were the "boss" — you were the one who had the responsibility of 'being in charge.' Tell us what it was like for you."

During the participation phase, ask the children:

"How did it feel to be the one who was 'in charge'?"

"What was easy and what was difficult about it?"

Following the review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do you think that children should be "the boss" more often?*
2. *Is being the one who's "in charge" always easy?*
3. *What is a good leader like?*

"A Time When Somebody Else Was Boss"

Today the children will discuss the situation that is more prominent in their lives. They will be focusing on how it feels when they are working with someone else who is the boss. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think of a recent time when you were working with other people, but you were not the boss and somebody else was. Tell us about the situation."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did it feel for somebody else to be the boss?"

"If you could have, would you have changed places with him/her? Why or why not?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *When do you feel okay about **not** being the one who is in charge?*
2. *When do you feel okay about being the boss?*
3. *Is there anything you can do to affect these conditions?*

"Something I Did (or Made) That I'm Proud Of"

Today the children will have another opportunity to increase their awareness of their own capabilities and accomplishments. This topic is similar to "I Did It All By Myself," but the focus is not necessarily on an independent accomplishment. However, if the child did do the task all by him/herself, so much the better.

Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about something that you did (or made) that you are proud of. We would like to hear about what it was."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What was your feeling when you (fixed your bike)?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Are all of us the same in that we all like to feel proud of ourselves for getting a job done well?*

"A Time When I Worked Too Much (or Too Hard)"

Practically everything can be done to excess and this includes work. By offering the children the opportunity to discuss this topic we are exposing them to a notion that balances the picture. Work can be satisfying and very good for us and for others, but it *is* possible to overdo it. Many adults are very overworked and in some way the antecedent attitudes that cause them to push themselves unreasonably to accomplish too many tasks for the time available, may very likely have begun in childhood. Briefly discuss these ideas with the children and then begin the session by asking them:

"Think of a time when you worked too much(or too hard). Tell us about it."

Many of the children will tell about a situation in which someone else (remind them not to mention names) kept after them to do the work. In these cases, do not get involved with the issue of whether or not the person was justified, or whether or not the child's attitude is appropriate. Rather, keep it simple by asking each child:

"How did you feel at the time?"

"If there were any other people involved, how did they seem to be feeling?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the things that you noticed about this session that you would like to mention?*

"A Way I Earned Something and What I Did With It"

This is a matter of concern for most children. By this time in their lives, many of them will have earned some money, (or some other type of compensation) for work that they have performed. As they grow older, their opportunities to earn will increase. Besides giving each child a chance to tell about his/her own effectiveness, this session will offer all of the children a number of suggestions for paying jobs that they could do. In addition, each child will receive input with respect to the use of earnings. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you did some kind of work and you earned something for your work. (It doesn't have to have been money.) Tell us about the job and how you did it. If you would like to tell us about what you did with what you earned, we would like to hear about that too."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel about doing the job?"*
>
> *"How did you feel about earning (the money)?"*
>
> *"How do you feel now about the way you used (the money)?"*

Following a review, ask the children:

1. *Did you get any new ideas about ways to earn money (or something else) from this session? What were they?*

"A Time When I Traded With Somebody"

Acquiring new objects and bartering does not always involve money. Sometimes we simply trade things with one another to acquire what we want. Since this is a very real possibility and a utilitarian function for recycling goods, this topic will have suggestive value for all of the children in the circle. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you wanted something but you didn't have any money, so instead of buying it you worked out a trade arrangement with somebody. Tell us how you arranged it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How do you feel about the trade now?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some things that you noticed about this session that you would like to mention?*

"Something Worth Saving Money For"

Today the children will discuss some of the things that they believe are valuable enough to save their money for and how they feel about waiting and saving for something. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"If you had some money and you were going to save it, what do you think is valuable enough to save for? Or, maybe you are saving your money for something now. In either case, tell us about the thing you think is worth saving for."*

Do not allow the discussion to center on how much money each child has, rather help them focus on things that they consider to be worth saving for, regardless of how much they've got to save.

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you feel about waiting for something as you save for it?"

"How do you think it would feel when you have accumulated enought for (a paint set)?"

Discuss how all people have the right to use their money the way they wish and how saving money can sometimes be difficult. Yet it is worthwhile for many people, who do manage to acquire valuable things (material and otherwise), because they waited and saved.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do you think that you should always save every bit of money that you have?*
2. *Should you spend it all?*
3. *Why or why not?*

"Something That I Want To Do (or Make) Someday That I Haven't Done Yet"

Today's session is of a very open-ended nature. It offers the children the opportunity to look into the future and to think about something that they presently wish for, or plan to do, that may actually happen some day. They may go as far into the future in responding as they wish. Begin by asking them:

"Is there some kind of job or project that you would like to do someday, or something that you would like to make, that you haven't done yet? It could be what you would like to do when you are an adult, or any kind of job that you would like to have while you are a teenager, or possibly even some kind of task that you are looking forward to doing in the next few days. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask:

"How do you think it will feel when you are (making bread)?"

"Are there any other feelings about it that you have ***right now*** *that you would like to share?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *How far into the future did we go when we thought about what we wanted to do (or make) someday that we haven't done yet?*
2. *Is it easier to think about something that you want to do (or make) in the next few days, than it is to think of something you want to do (or make) as a teenager, or as an adult?*

"Something That I Like To Do Now That Could Relate To My Job When I'm An Adult"

Today the children will have the opportunity to see how some of the things that they enjoy doing now might possibly relate to their career choice. This is an important notion. The more a child becomes *aware* of the kinds of things that he/she enjoys doing, the more likely the child is to find a job in the future that coincides with his/her preferences. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about some kind of job that you like to do now that could in some way relate to the kind of job you could have when you are an adult. Tell us about it."

For children who cannot think of anything that they like to do now that could relate to their career choice, ask:

"What kind of job would you like to have as an adult?"

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you think it would feel to be (an architect)?"

Be very sure to remain perfectly accepting in this session. If a child names some kind of occupation that you feel is unlikely for that child, be very careful that you in no way reflect this to him/her. People who now hold responsible and rewarding jobs first imagined themselves doing so at some earlier time in their lives. For this reason, this session is likely to be an important one for many of the children.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is it too early to start thinking about the kinds of jobs we like?*
2. *Should we make up our minds now about what jobs we will have as adults?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ENDEAVORS:

Earning Privileges

Find ways for the children to earn privileges in the classroom by undertaking various kinds of supplemental endeavors, such as academic assignments, projects that will enhance the atmosphere in the classrom, or other. Reward the children by affording them certain privileges that are commensurate with the effort that was expended.

Giving Children Leadership Responsibilities

Find as many ways as possible to allow the children to take on leadership responsibilities. They may be chairmen of committees, captains of teams, "consultants", etc. When you notice that a child is doing a good job of being a leader, be sure to reinforce the behavior by making positive comments of a specific nature to all of the children about the *ways* that the child is being effective as the "person in charge."

Interviewing and Reporting

Ask the children to conduct two interviews, one with a teenager, and one with an adult, who have jobs that seem interesting to them. Ask them to think of at least three questions to ask each of the interviewees about their jobs. The questions may relate to the kinds of feelings that they have about doing their jobs, about the salaries they earn, and the qualifications they needed to get the job. The information gained may be reported in written form along with the child's reaction to the interview process. The reports may be compiled in a class notebook for the children to read and share with each other. Oral reports may also be made to the class regarding the career information that was acquired.

Guest Speakers — Group Interviews

Invite several individuals who have various kinds of jobs to come to the class to speak to the children about their jobs. Attempt to achieve a wide variety in the kinds of careers to be represented (labor, professional, service, "boss", employee, etc.), and if possible, have people come who *do not* generally fit the stereotype (racial, ethnic, sexual, or other) of the person who generally has that particular type of job. (For example, ask a woman doctor to come to speak to the class.) After each speaker has addressed the class for a period of time about his/her job, encourage the class to ask questions.

UNIT VIII

SOCIAL INTERACTION: FRIENDSHIP

Having friends is one of the most enjoyable things about being alive. As Lord Byron put it: "People, yes, people are the flowers of the universe . . . and it has been a pleasure to have temporarily strolled in your garden."

By focusing on friendship the children will have an opportunity to relive some of the enjoyable feelings they have experienced when they have been with friends and to think about what went into those experiences that made them enjoyable. They will take a close look at such important matters as things to do, and not to do, when you want to make friends, how friendships operate, how peer pressure works, and how we can powerfully and positively affect the lives of other people by being friendly to them.

Topics on Friendship

"What I Value in a Friend"

"One of the Best Times I Ever Had with a Friend"

"How I Made Friends and It Turned Out Good"

"Something I Never do When I Want to Make Friends with Someone"

"One of the Nicest Things a Friend Ever Did for Me"

"Something Nice That I Did for a Friend"

"If I'm With One Friend"

"When a Group of My Friends Get Together"

"My Friends Tried to Make Me Do Something That I Didn't Want to Do"

"A Friend (or Friends) and I Got Into Trouble"

"My Friend and I Got Mad at Each Other"

"I Reached Out to Someone When I Knew He/She Needed a Friend"

"What I Value in a Friend"

By discussing the things that they value in people who they call their friends, the children will, in this session, be focusing directly on various qualitites and behaviors. By so doing, they will gain information which may increase their awareness of what kinds of qualities and behaviors are generally seen as being desirable in a friend. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about the things that you think are important for friends to do for each other and the kinds of qualities that you think a good friend should have. Tell us about some of the things that you have thought of."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How do you feel about your friend when (he/she sticks by you when other people are mad at you)?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the main things that were mentioned in this session about the qualities that we value in friends?*

2. *If you want your friend to have these qualities, does this mean that these would be good qualities for you to have too?*

"One of the Best Times I Ever Had With a Friend"

This topic was suggested by a fifth grader. Today the children will have an opportunity to share delightful experiences that they had with their friends, which in itself is a positive experience. They will also learn what kinds of things other children enjoy doing. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were with a friend and you were having a wonderful time together. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel when you (flew kites with your friend)?"*

> *"How did your friend seem to feel?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Did all of us get exactly the same feelings in exactly the same ways when we had good times with our friends?*

2. *What differences in feelings, and experiences, did you notice?*

"How I Made Friends and It Turned Out Good"

This topic was also suggested by a fifth grader. By discussing it, the children are given an opportunity to tell how they have been socially successful. They will also benefit from hearing about a number of other methods that proved to be successful for making friends. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you wanted to make friends with someone and so you did something to make friends and it turned out good. Tell us about how you did it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel when you approached him/her?"

"How did you feel when you became friends?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking:

1. *Did we all make friends in the same way?*
2. *What were some of the similarities in the ways we made friends?*
3. *What were some of the differences?*

"Something I Never Do When I Want to Make Friends With Someone"

In today's session the children will focus their attention on the kinds of behaviors that they deliberately avoid when they want someone to like them. By sharing in this way, each child will have an opportunity to gain increased awareness of ineffective modes of social interaction. They will also be exposed to individual differences in people. Begin the session by asking them:

"If you want to make friends with someone, what is something that you never do. Tell us about what it is."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What do you think would happen if you did (make fun of the person)?"

"How do you feel when someone (makes fun of you)?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the main things that you noticed about this session?*

"One of the Nicest Things A Friend Ever Did for Me"

It is a genuinely heartwarming experience for people to be able to tell others about something nice that someone did for them. Today the children will have an opportunity to do this. Through this kind of discussion the children will increase their repertoire of friendly behaviors. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about something that was very nice that a friend did for you. They may have given you something, or they may have asked you to a party, or maybe they said something to you that made you feel very good. Whatever it was, we would like to hear about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did it feel (when your friend arranged for you to go with his/her family on a camping trip)?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Why do you think our friends do nice things for us?*
2. *What similarities did you notice in our feelings when our friends did nice things for us?*

"Something Nice That I Did For A Friend"

Today the children will take deserved credit for their positive behavior, by telling about something nice that they did for a friend. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about something nice that you did for a friend, and tell us what it was."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel when you (told your friend that you liked playing with him/her)?"

"How did your friend seem to feel about it?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Why do you think we do nice things for our friends?*
2. *What similarities did you notice in the feelings we get when we do nice things for our friends?*

"If I'm With One Friend"

Today the children will focus on the kinds of things they like to do when they are with just one friend, as opposed to being with a group of friends. An objective of this, and the following session, in which they will focus on the kinds of things they prefer doing when they are with a group of friends, is, to increase their awareness of their feelings and behaviors in the two situations. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about something that you like to do when you are with one friend, and not a group of friends. Tell us about a time when you and a friend did it together."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you generally feel when you are doing things you like to do with one friend?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the things that you noticed about this session?*

"When a Group of My Friends Get Together"

Today the children will focus on how they feel, and how they behave, when they are with a group of friends. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about something that you like to do when you are with two or more friends. Tell us about a time when you did it with them."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you feel when you (dance to records with your friends)?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *When you and your friends are together in a group, in what ways do you behave differently than when you are by yourselves, or when you are with one other friend?*

"My Friends Tried To Make Me Do Something That I Didn't Want To Do"

Today the children will discuss the issue of peer pressure and its effects. By relating this concept to a specific time when a group of their peers tried to influence them, the children will have an opportunity to become more aware of how peer pressure operates. Through such a discussion, leading to awareness, it follows that they will also have the opportunity to become more personally in charge of directing their own lives, and less given to succumbing to the will of the group. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think of a time when you were with some of your friends, and they tried to get you to do something that you didn't want to do. It isn't necessary to tell whether or not they succeeded in getting you to do it, just tell us about what happened when they were trying to get you to do it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel about what your friends were trying to do to you?"*
>
> *"How did you feel toward yourself?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *When you are with just one friend and you want your friend to do something, is it harder, or easier, to get him/her to do it than when you and a group of friends are trying to get him/her to do it?*
2. *Do you* ***have*** *to do what your friends want you to do?*
3. *Do your friends* ***have*** *to do what you want them to do?*

"A Friend (or Friends) and I Got into Trouble"

Today the children will again have the opportunity to explore peer pressure, how it operates and possible consequences of group behavior that bothers, or harms, others in some way. Sometimes children's relationships involve daring, coercion, and the need to "impress" one another. In this session, the children will have the opportunity to explore these specific components of peer pressure. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think of a time when you got into trouble with one friend, or a group of friends. Tell us about what happened."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel when you were doing the thing that got you into trouble?"*
>
> *"How did you feel when you were being criticized or punished?"*
>
> *"Who did you feel like blaming?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Does it make any sense, or do any good, to say, "It's not my fault, he made me do it!"?*

"My Friend and I Got Mad at Each Other"

Conflict is an inevitable component in human relationships. Even the best of friends become bothered, or downright angry, with one another at one time or other. Today the children will discuss this inevitability. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you and a friend got mad at each other. Tell us about what happened."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel when you and your friend weren't 'getting along'?"*
>
> *"How did your friend seem to feel?"*
>
> *"If you are friends again, tell us what happened that got you and your friend over the anger."*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is it possible for human beings to have relationships in which they never have any negative feelings toward one another?*
2. *Are you a bad person if you get mad at your friend?*
3. *Is your friend a bad person if he/she gets mad at you?*

"I Reached Out to Someone When I Knew He/She Needed A Friend"

Today the children will focus on their power to positively affect the feelings of another person. Our objective in this session is to give them an opportunity to become aware of how potent their friendly propensities are and to see the value in this kind of positive behavior. Through this awareness, it is likely that friendly behavior will be reinforced in the children. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you knew that someone needed a friend very much, so you did something to show him/her that you wanted to be friends. Tell us about how you did it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did the person react to you when you reached out to him/her?"*
>
> *"How did you feel about yourself when you did it?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *We are finding out in the circle sessions about the kinds of power that we have. What power did we discuss today?*
2. *How does it make you feel when you are "down and out" and somebody is friendly to you?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO FRIENDSHIP

Creative Poetry Focusing on Friendship

Ask the children to write a poem about friendship. Suggest the title, "Why I Like My Friend and Why My Friend Likes Me."

History: Learning about Famous Friendships

Ask the children to investigate some of the friendships of famous persons of the past, such as the friendships that existed between Naomi and Ruth (recorded in the Book of Ruth in the Old Testament of the Bible), John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, Capt. Meriwether Lewis and Lt. William Clark, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Adlai Stevenson and Eleanor Roosevelt, to name a few. Ask them to find out why these people were such good friends and how they contributed to each other's lives. They may report their findings to the class in oral, or written form.

Creative Dramatics: Dealing with Peer Pressure

Ask a group of children to extemporaneously role play the following situation for the class:

SCENE ONE: A group of children, who are friends, are together. One of them gets an idea and asks another to do something that would get the child into trouble if he/she were caught doing it. All of the other children agree that the child should do it, except for one, who says nothing at first. The other children, however, keep urging the child to do the thing that would get him/her into trouble. Finally the child who did not join the group in its urgings, speaks up and tells the group that he/she feels bad about what is happening. Despite this, the child who was put under pressure agrees to do the action the group wants and leaves to go do it.

SCENE TWO: The child returns and tells the group that he/she did get into trouble and begins to blame it on the group. At this point, the group deserts him/her — all except for the child who did not join in with the urgings. To this child the child who got into trouble, complains and talks about how sorry he/she feels for him/herself, while the other child listens acceptingly.

Allow the children who will be doing the drama to rehearse for a period of time before the presentation. They may give each character in the drama a name and may decide on such factors as setting and the action the key character does that gets him/her into trouble.

Following the presentation, conduct a class discussion, asking the following questions:

"Who was responsible when (Sandra) got into trouble?"

"Did (she) have any responsibility in it?"

"What do you think of (her) decision to go along with the group?"

"Who showed the most courage to act according to his/her thoughts and feelings?"

"Why was it so hard for (Sandra) to say, 'No' to the group?"

"What do you think would have happened if (Sandra) had not done what the group wanted (her) to do?"

"What would be worse, getting into trouble, or facing possible rejection from the group when it wants you to do something that you refuse to do?"

Music: A Song About Friendship

Play the song, "Glad to Have A Friend Like You," on the recording, *Free to Be . . . You and Me.* Learn it together so that it may become a class song.

Practicing Friendly Behavior

This activity is like "Secret Pals," however, it is for one day only and is called *"Secret Friends For The Day."* Every Tuesday and Thursday allow each of the children to draw a name (without looking) of one of his/her classmates. The name drawn is the child's "secret friend for the day."

Tell the children that the object of this activity is for them to do friendly things for the person who is their secret friend, but to try not to let it be known to the person that you are his/her secret friend. Tell them that if they keep from doing something friendly for the person as a means for keeping their secret, it won't count. (Phony friendliness won't count either.) The children will soon find that they will need to do many friendly things for a lot of their classmates so it won't be obvious to their secret friend that he/she's the one.

Before going home at the end of the day each child will stand up individually and make a guess, naming the person they think drew their name. If they are right the child should acknowledge it. If they are not right, ask the class, *"Will the real secret friend of (Andy Wong) please stand up!"* The child will then reveal who he/she is.

Before drawing names in the morning, take the names of children who are absent out of the drawing box. Why not put your name in and draw out a name each time too!

Suggest to the children that they have an opportunity to *practice* friendliness with each other on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

UNIT IX

AWARENESS: EXPLORING FEELINGS

As human beings we are very special. We behave and experience consciousness as all animals do, but humankind is capable of intellectual experience beyond that of the other animals. We also experience a more varied and intricate emotional life. While we know that other animals do experience some of the emotions, and we have seen them learn, and even use reason and acquire skills, up until now only human beings express their ideas and feelings in verbal language. It is a theoretical assumption of the Human Development Program that verbal interaction is one key vehicle by which we maintain and enhance our mental health, as we share, explore, sort out and deal with our feelings and thoughts with one another.

This Awareness unit focuses directly on the wide range of emotional experiences that we human beings have. Through verbal interaction the participants will have the opportunity to become aware that they experience all of the emotions and so do other people, and that emotions themselves are neither good nor bad, moral nor immoral. When we realize that we are not the only ones who have ever become surprised, confused, angry, jealous, or other, it is an eye-opening experience and can positively affect the ways in which we regard ourselves. It is particularly enlightening for children to find out that adults, especially teachers, are human too! They appreciate it when you share with them in the circle because then they can identify with you.

While exploring the emotions, this unit also calls the attention of the children to the ways that feelings and behavior affect each other, how sometimes we have mixed feelings, how our bodies respond naturally to our emotions (such as a lump in the throat when our feelings have been hurt). The unit also emphasizes how our feelings and behaviors can affect those of other people and vice-versa, and wherever possible the value of making choices, as opposed to responding mechanistically, is addressed.

Since this is a long unit, you may at times decide to shift to another one and complete it and then return to this one. Your own knowledge of the readiness level and the needs of your group will be your best guide.

Topics for Exploring Feelings

"A Time When I Felt Happy"

"A Time When I Was Too Hot or Too Cold"

"Once When I Was Physically Injured"

"A Time When I Felt Shy"

"A Time When I Was Feeling Hopeful"

"Once When I Wanted Some Attention"

"A Time When I Felt Bored"

"A Time When I Felt Like Being Stubborn"

"A Time When I Had Suspicious Feelings"

"A Time When I Felt Relaxed"

"A Time When I Felt Uneasy"

"Once When I Was Feeling Confused"

"A Time When I Was Amused"

"Once When I Was Feeling Dependent"

"Once When I Was Feeling Independent"

"A Time When I Had Protective Feelings"

"A Time When I Had Possessive Feelings"

"Once When I Was Feeling Optimistic"

"Once When I Was Feeling Pessimistic"

"A Time When I Was Feeling Involved"

"A Time When I Was Feeling Uninvolved"

"A Time When I Felt That I Was Worthless"

"A Time When I Felt That I Was Important"

"A Time When I Was Feeling Lonely"

"Once When I Got Embarrassed"

"Once When I Felt Excited About Something"

"A Time When I Felt Awkward"

"A Time When I Was Scared"

"Once When I Was Feeling Patient"

"Once When I Became Frustrated"

"A Time When I Got Jealous"

"Once When I Became Irritated"

"A Time When I Felt Like I Belonged"

"A Time When I Got Angry"

"A Time When My Feelings Were Hurt"

"A Time When I Felt Sorry for Myself"

"A Time When I Felt Sad"

"Once When I Was Delightfully Surprised"

"A Time When I Felt Like Getting Revenge"

"A Time When I Became Self-Conscious"

"A Time When I Experienced Relief"

"Once When I Felt Guilty"

"A Time When I Felt Powerful"

"A Time When I Felt Hateful"

"Once When I Was Feeling Loved"

"A Time When I Felt Loving"

"A Time When I Felt Happy"

This unit begins on a positive note. Although this topic was discussed before in the beginning of the program it is always a positive experience for the children to talk about times when they experienced contentment and joy. Therefore, it can be effectively repeated many times. Begin this session by asking the children:

> *"Think about a time when you felt happy. Tell us about where you were and what was happening."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"Did you have any other feelings at that time too?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Did we all seem to feel happy in exactly the same way?*
2. *What were some of the differences that you noticed?*

"A Time When I Was Too Hot or Too Cold"

Most people appreciate an opportunity to talk about their physical discomforts and the emotional feelings they have that accompany them. Today the children will have a chance to do just this. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were too hot or too cold. Try to remember where you were and what was happening. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"Did 'being too hot or too cold' cause any other feelings?"*
>
> *"How did you react to 'being too hot or too cold'?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *If someone near you says that they are too hot or too cold, but you aren't, is there something wrong with him/her, or with you?*
2. *Is everyone comfortable at exactly the same temperature?*

"Once When I Was Physically Injured"

Today's topic will provide an opportunity for the children to talk about a time when they sustained an injury, and how they felt about it. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when your body got hurt in some way. Tell us about the injury and what caused it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel about (spraining your ankle)?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *When something happens to our bodies, can it affect the way we feel in general?*

"A Time When I Felt Shy"

Everybody, at one time or another, does not feel like being outgoing. Today the children will have the opportunity to talk about situations that they have experienced that brought about shy or bashful feelings in them. Begin the session by asking them:

"Were you ever in a situation where you did not want to say or do anything because you were feeling bashful or shy? Tell us about the situation."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did your body feel when you were feeling shy?"

"What did you do?"

If the response to the latter question is "nothing," ask the children

"Is doing nothing a behavior? And if so, what is it like?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Were there any similar circumstances in the situations that we were in that may have contributed to causing shyness?*
2. *What were some similarities and differences that you noticed in our behaviors when we were feeling shy?*
3. *Do you think that sometimes people act like they are feeling comfortable in a situation when they are really feeling shy?*

"A Time When I Was Feeling Hopeful"

This topic will afford the children with an opportunity to discuss feelings of hope that they have had, and other possible feelings that may have accompanied their hopeful feelings. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you wanted something very much and you thought that you might have a chance of getting what you wanted . . . You were very hopeful that your wish would come true. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, do not become overly involved in discussions related to whether or not they received the thing they hoped for. Rather, help them to focus on their feelings by asking:

"How did your body feel when you were hopeful?

"What other kinds of feelings did you have?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Even though at times we do suffer disappointments, is it still worthwhile to be hopeful?*

2. *How do you think it would affect someone if they stopped hoping for the things (or goals) that they want?*

"Once When I Wanted Some Attention"

Receiving attention is a basic human need. We all need attention. Today the children will have the opportunity to acknowledge this need in themselves, and to increase their awareness that it is universal. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you wanted very much for someone to pay attention to you. Tell us about what was happening."

As the children participate, ask them:

"Before you got the attention, how did you feel?"

"If you got the attention that you needed, how did you feel then?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Does everybody need attention?*

2. *What are some ways that you can think of for getting the attention that you need that won't bother or hurt you, or anyone else?*

"A Time When I Felt Bored"

Boredom is often a very difficult emotion to handle. By discussing it, the children will have a chance to increase their awareness that everyone gets bored at one time or another, and that there *are* things that they might be able to do about it the next time they start to feel bored. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you didn't feel like paying attention to, or getting involved in, the things that were going on around you because they didn't seem to be interesting enough. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you behave when you were feeling bored?"

"Were you having any other feelings too? If so, what were they?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Who is responsible for it when you become bored?*

2. *What are some ways that you can think of that might help you to end boredom?*

"A Time When I Felt Like Being Stubborn"

Discussing stubbornness will help each child to realize that everyone feels like being stubborn at one time or another (even if they don't behave in a stubborn way). Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about a time when you didn't want to do something that someone wanted you to do. You may have gone ahead and done it anyway, but you felt like being stubborn. Tell us about the situation."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What other feelings did you have?"

"How did the other person (or people) seem to feel?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *When someone feels like being stubborn, are there possibly some reasons for having those feelings?*
2. *Just because we feel like being stubborn, does that mean we have to behave in a stubborn way?*
3. *Is being stubborn helpful sometimes?*

"A Time When I Had Suspicious Feelings"

Today the children will have an opportunity to discuss how they suspected that something was going on that someone may have been trying to hide, even though they had no proof. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you were sure that something was happening, but no one would admit it . . . You were suspicious that something was going on 'behind your back'. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What did you say, and what did you do, when you were feeling suspicious?"

"Was it a comfortable feeling?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *In what ways might suspicious feelings be helpful?*
2. *Are suspicions ever imagined?*

"A Time When I Felt Relaxed"

In this session the children will be able to talk about their feelings of comfort and security. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you weren't upset or worried about anything. You felt relaxed and happy about everything that was going on. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How were you behaving when you were feeling relaxed?"

"What kinds of thoughts were you having?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Do people tend to relax more in some situations than in others?*

2. *If you want to relax, or help someone else to relax, what are some things that you can do?*

"A Time When I Felt Uneasy"

Today the children will talk about a time when they were feeling uneasy, rather than comfortable or relaxed. Begin the session by asking:

> *"Think of a time when you were feeling uneasy about something. . . when it was hard for you to relax, or to forget about something that may have been bothering you. Tell us about the way you felt."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did your body feel?"

"What did you do?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Are uneasy feelings ever useful?*

2. *Does it help us to allow ourselves to be uneasy about some problem that we cannot possibly change?*

"Once When I Was Feeling Confused"

Today the children will have the opportunity to tell about a time when they were confused about something, and to hear about how you and the other children became confused too. Because we sometimes "put ourselves down" when we are confused, it is important to realize that it is a universal phenomenon. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think about a time when you weren't sure about something. It may have been something that you were trying to do, or something that was going on around you that you didn't understand and you felt confused. Tell us about what was happening and how you felt."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you behave when you were feeling confused?"

"How did you feel about yourself?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do you think there is something you could do when you become confused?*

2. *If someone else seems to be confused, is there something that you could do to help?*

"A Time When I Was Amused"

It is an enjoyable experience indeed to talk about a time when something funny happened. Today the children will have the opportunity to do this again. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when something funny happened, and your feeling was one of amusement. Tell us about what happened."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did your body react when you were amused?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What similarities did you notice in the things that amused us?*
2. *Does everyone become amused at the very same things to the same degree?*

"Once When I Was Feeling Dependent"

Issues involving dependence and independence are important ones for children. It is helpful for them to realize, as they struggle toward independence, that everyone feels like being dependent sometimes. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were feeling like you were up against a situation that you couldn't handle all by yourself. You wanted to have someone take over for you and you wanted to depend on them to do it. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel about the situation?"*
>
> *"How did you feel about yourself?"*

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Do people ever reach an age when they no longer feel dependent on someone else at any time?*

"Once When I Was Feeling Independent"

Today the children will balance the picture by telling about a time when they felt independent. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were involved in some kind of situation you knew you could handle all by yourself, and you didn't need, or want, help from anyone else . . . You knew you could take care of things independently. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you feel about yourself when you were handling the situation independently?"*
>
> *"How did you handle it?"*
>
> *"What other feelings did you have?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do we ever become fully and completely independent?*

2. *Why do you think independence is something that people, in general, value highly?*

"A Time When I Had Protective Feelings"

Today the children will have the opportunity to talk about a time when they felt like they wanted to protect, or take care of, someone, or something, such as an animal. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think of a time when you were with some person, or animal, or maybe even something like a plant, that you wanted to protect . . . Perhaps in some way there was some threat to the person, or thing, that you were with. Tell us about what was happening."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel toward the (children who were throwing rocks at the cat)?"

"How did you feel toward yourself (when you rescued it)?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were some of the similarities and differences that you noticed in the situations that we told about and the feelings that we had?*

"A Time When I Had Possessive Feelings"

This activity relates to yesterday's session when the children talked about having protective feelings. Today, however, they will discuss the more extreme attitude of possessiveness. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Sometimes people have possessive feelings about things, or animals, or even other people. Think about a time when you wanted something to be your very own, or to be completely under your control. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did (your friends seems to feel when you did not want them to touch your new dog)?"

"How did you feel about yourself?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do you think that protective feelings can lead to possessive ones?*

2. *Has anyone ever been possessive with you? Maybe they wanted to possess something that you wanted to share, or maybe they wanted to possess* ***you****, (like they didn't want you to have any other friends, except for them). What kind of feelings did you get as a result of their behavior?*

"Once When I Was Feeling Optimistic"

In this and tomorrow's session, the children will discuss the attitudinal polarities, optimism and pessimism. They will discuss times when they personally experienced both feelings. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about some situation that you were involved in where there was something being planned, or worked on, and you felt that the results were going to be good . . . You felt optimistic about the outcome. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"Did the way the other people feel have any effect on you?"*
>
> *"Did your optimism seem to have any effect on the way they felt?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do you think being optimistic about something helps to bring about positive results?*
2. *What were some of the similarities and differences that you noticed in the situations that we described that caused us to feel optimistic?*

"Once When I Was Feeling Pessimistic"

Today the children will talk about pessimistic feelings that they have had. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were involved in some kind of an effort that seemed to you to be going poorly, and you felt rather pessimistic about the outcome . . . You didn't expect the results to be too good. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"Did the feelings of the other people who were involved in the situation affect you?"*
>
> *"Did your feelings seem to influence them in any way?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do the pessimistic, or optimistic, feelings that people have about something seem to have any influence on the outcome?*

"A Time When I Was Feeling Involved"

Today the children will have an opportunity to focus on the kinds of feelings that they get when they are very involved in some kind of activity. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were doing something. It could have been some kind of game that you were playing, or some kind of work that you were doing that you were concentrating on very hard . . . and while you were doing it, you weren't thinking about anything else except what you were doing. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you feel about being deeply involved in something?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Does everyone seem to become involved in doing the very same activity?*
2. *What are some of the similarities and differences that you noticed in the things that we told about, and the levels of involvement, that we described?*

"A Time When I Was Feeling Uninvolved"

Today's session offers the children the opportunity to talk about a time when they were feeling distant, or uninvolved, from some situation. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when something was going on around you, but for some reason, you were feeling uninvolved. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What other kinds of feelings did you have when you were feeling uninvolved that may have kept you from involving yourself?"

"How were you behaving?"

"Did anything happen to change your feelings? If so, what?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Is it possible for us to* ***choose*** *to become involved or not to become involved?*
2. *Who might be in a good position to do something about it when you are feeling uninvolved?*

"A Time When I Felt That I Was Worthless"

(Due to the complex nature of this topic, it should be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

At the outset of this session it is important to reiterate that the Human Development Program holds to the theoretical assumption that all people are valuable and important. They are *never* worthless. Only destructive behaviors (in the sense that they are hurtful and/or maladaptive) are of no value. Therefore when someone tells about feeling worthless, our attitude is that they are confused. Their feelings are real, but their conclusions are incorrect. The person has downgraded him/herself as a result of some experience.

The purpose of this session is to help the children to understand that *they are okay*, even though they may be told that they aren't by some outside influence, or even if they are feeling bad about themselves because they know that their behavior isn't always okay. Besides learning about this concept, this session will provide the children with increased awareness of the understanding that they aren't the only ones who have these kinds of negative feelings about themselves, as they listen to your statement and the statements of the other children.

Begin the session by asking them:

"Have you ever had the feeling that you are a worthless, or a bad person, because of something that happened? Tell us about the feeling and about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

*"Was it hard to remember that you **are** a very okay person when you were feeling that way?"*

"How did feeling worthless affect your behavior — what did you do and say?"

Discuss together how this kind of feeling is nothing more than that — *it's only a feeling. It does not reflect reality.* Generally, when we feel this way, it seems so real and the feeling is very strong. It is important, however, to try to remember that the feeling will, in time, go away and there might be some things that we can remind ourselves of that will help us to get rid of it.

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *Are you a worthless, or a bad, person if someone says so?*
2. *Are you a worthless, or a bad person if you do something that you or someone else thinks is a bad thing?*
3. *What is something that we need to remember to tell ourselves when we are "caught up" in feelings like this?*

"A Time When I Felt That I Was Important"

Since the Human Development Program stresses the fact that every human being *is* important, the children will today be talking about reality. *They are important!* Discuss this fact with them at the outset. Then ask them:

"Think about a time when you were feeling very good about yourself. Possibly it was a moment when you realized just how important you are. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How does your body feel when you are aware of how important you are?"

"How do you feel right now as you realize how important you are?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *If you are important, does that mean that other people are important too?*

"A Time When I Was Feeling Lonely"

Loneliness is a recurring universal condition, and something everyone has to face, and deal with, at one time or another. It should be made clear that today we are not talking about "alone times" that can, and often are, very pleasant. Rather we are focusing on the kinds of feelings we get when we wish we weren't all by ourselves. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about a time when you were all alone and you didn't want to be . . . A time when you were feeling lonely. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What other kinds of feelings did you have when you were feeling lonely?"

"What did you do?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some things that we can do for ourselves when we are feeling lonely?*

2. *Is loneliness something that can always be avoided?*

"Once When I Got Embarrassed"

This session will undoubtedly bring about a great deal of laughter and giggling among the children. When embarrassing moments occur, they produce feelings that, when recalled later, seek resolution in physical discharge. Therefore, the laughter is not only an inescapable component of this session, but actually a helpful, positive outcome. Begin the session by briefly discussing with the children how everyone gets embarrassed at one time or another. Then ask them:

> *"Think about a time when something happened to you that embarrassed you. If it wouldn't give you bad feelings to tell us about it, we would like to know what happened and how you felt."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you behave when you were embarrassed?"*

> *"How do you feel about the embarrassing incident now?"*

Discuss with the children how embarrassment, like feeling worthless, *is only just a feeling* and need not permanently affect future behavior unless we let it.

Culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *If you try something that doesn't work and you get embarrassed, do you think that you should never try it again?*

"Once When I Felt Excited About Something"

This is an engaging topic. It will give the children an opportunity to tell each other about things that they felt very stimulated and enthused about. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you got very excited about something. It could have been something that you were going to do, or something that was happening to you at that moment. Tell us about what it was."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"Did your excitement lead to any other kinds of feelings?"*

> *"How did you show your excitement?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Did all of us get excited in exactly the same way?*

"A Time When I Felt Awkward"

Everyone feels awkward at one time or another, particularly children. In fact, this is an issue that fifth graders will undoubtedly face on an increasing basis as they continue to interact with others in new ways. The important emphasis in this session, as it is in several others, is to remind the children that feeling awkward is *just a feeling*, and it would be unfortunate if these feelings inhibited them from trying new modes of expressing themselves in the future. Begin this session by asking them:

> *"Think of a time when you were trying to do something, but you didn't feel very good about the way you were doing it . . . You felt as though you were being awkward. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"What other feelings did you have?"*
>
> *"Did other people seem to feel that you were being awkward?"*

Culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What do you think causes awkwardness?*
2. *Can it ever be completely avoided?*
3. *If we feel awkward when we try something, do you think we should keep from ever trying it again?*

"A Time When I Was Scared"

Fear comes in many forms. Today the children will have the opportunity to tell about times when they were frightened and to realize that everyone experiences fear at one time or other. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think of a time when you were scared. It could have been a mild, anxious feeling that you got about something that might have happened, or possibly you were frightened about something that did happen, or maybe you were even terrified by something like a dream. Tell us about what it was."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"What happened to your body when you were scared?"*
>
> *"When you look back on the thing that scared you, how do you feel about it now?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do you think that there may be some reason why people get scared that helps them in some way? If so, what is it?*
2. *We may realize that fear can be a signal to us to stay away from something dangerous, or to keep us from doing something that may be harmful. However, do you think that it is necessary for us to stay away from, or keep from doing, everything that gives us fearful feelings?*

"Once When I Was Feeling Patient"

Today the children will have an opportunity to tell about a time when they were feeling very tolerant and patient. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were feeling very relaxed and patient with some person, or some thing, in a particular situation. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did the other people seem to react to your patience?"*
>
> *"How did you feel about yourself when you were being patient?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is it possible for us to* ***choose*** *to behave in a patient manner?*

"Once When I Became Frustrated"

Frustration is a common emotion that all of us have to deal with frequently. Today the children will have a chance to talk about times when they were frustrated and to realize that other people get frustrated too. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you became very annoyed about the way things were going. Possibly you were trying to accomplish something and it seemed to be very difficult for you so you became frustrated. Tell us about what was happening."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you behave when you were feeling frustrated?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do the very same conditions frustrate all people in the very same ways?*
2. *If someone becomes frustrated by some condition that doesn't frustrate you, is there something wrong with that person or with you?*
3. *What do you think is a responsible way to handle a situation when you become frustrated?*

"A Time When I Got Jealous"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Jealousy is usually a very unwelcome emotion that everyone experiences at one time or another. Today the children will have the opportunity to become aware that not only have they experienced the emotion of jealousy, but that other people have too. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you felt jealous of someone because they had something, or got to do something, that you wanted to have, or do, very much. Tell us about the situation."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you behave when you were feeling jealous?"

"What were some of your thoughts?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is there something wrong, or bad, about a person who feels jealous?*
2. *What do you think are some responsible ways to behave when you are jealous that won't hurt you, or anyone else?*

"Once When I Became Irritated"

Irritability is a fairly common condition that everyone experiences in themselves and in other at times. It is closely related to frustration, but today, the children will focus on the bodily sensations that accompany irritability. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think of a time when you were feeling uncomfortable and irritable. It could have been about something that was happening around you, or it might have been because of a feeling that you were having, such as being tired, or hungry, or unable to get something that you needed, or maybe even because of the way someone was treating you. Tell us about what caused you to be irritable."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did your body feel when you were irritable?"

"How did you behave?"

"How did other people react toward you?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *While some people may be more prone to be irritable more often than others, is there something wrong with, or bad, about a person if they get irritable sometimes?*
2. *What do you think are some things that you could do about it when you realize that you are becoming irritated?*
3. *How do you think people would like for you to treat them when they are irritated?*

"A Time When I Felt Like I Belonged"

It is important for us all, especially children, to feel like we belong in the place where we want to be. It is a particularly comfortable and secure feeling. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you were with someone, or some group, who you liked being with, and you knew they liked having you there with them . . . You felt like you really belonged. Tell us about the situation."

As the children participate, ask them:

"Did you feel that it was really okay to be yourself in that situation?"

"What was your behavior like?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the ways that you can help others to feel like they belong?*

"A Time When I Got Angry"

Anger is another universal emotion that results from a wide variety of causes and expresses itself in a variety of forms and degrees. Today the children will have an opportunity to explore together, some of the conditions that caused them to become angry, (miffed, resentful, hostile, furious, etc.). Begin the session by asking them:

"Think of a time when you got angry about something. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What happened to your body when you got angry?"

"What did you say and what did you do?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the similarities and differences that you may have noticed in the situations that caused anger in us and the degrees to which we got angry?*

"A Time When My Feelings Were Hurt"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

This topic relates to one of the most sensitive parts of every human being. The painful emotions that result from insult, ridicule, humiliation, or the like, are indeed deep and very often these feelings are hard to forget. By discussing this topic, the children will have the opportunity to increase their awareness that it is possible for every person to get his/her feelings hurt. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think of a time when someone (it isn't important who) hurt your feelings. Tell us about how it happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"When you had your feelings hurt, how did your body react?"

"What did you say and what did you do?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the main things that you could avoid doing to other people when you don't want to hurt their feelings?*

2. *What do you think might be something that you could do if you have hurt someone's feelings?*

"A Time When I Felt Sorry for Myself"

This topic is closely related to the prior topic that addresses the issue of hurt feelings. Sometimes when our feelings get hurt we start to feel sorry for ourselves. While this is natural to some degree, it can be a maladaptive behavioral reaction if the feelings of self pity become

magnified to the extent that we fail to gain any insight from the incident and hang onto feelings of persecution. Briefly discuss these ideas with the children. Then ask them:

> *"Can you think of a time when you were feeling very sorry for yourself because of some sort of unfortunate thing that may have happened to you? Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"Did it seem to help you in any way to continue to pity yourself?"*

> *"How did other people seem to react to you when you were feeling this way?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *If we feel very bad about something, what is a possible thing that we could do that might be better for ourselves than to hold onto feelings of self-pity?*

"A Time When I Felt Sad"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Misfortune and tragedy are an inescapable part of life. Everyone feels sad about something at some time or other. Today the children will have a chance to talk about this reality. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you felt sad. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did your body feel when you were sad?"*

> *"What did your body do?"*

Discuss how frequently we cry when we feel sad, and how the crying is the way that we naturally get rid of the hurt. As the song, "It's All Right To Cry"[1] says:

> *"It's all right to cry*
> *Crying takes the sad out of you*
> *It's all right to cry,*
> *It might make you feel better!"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the things that you noticed about this session that you would like to mention?*

"Once When I Was Delightfully Surprised"

This topic is offered at this point as a break in a series of complex topics that are negative in tone. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think of a time when something unexpected happened that surprised you and you were delighted about the surprise. Tell us about what happened."*

"It's All Right To Cry" was written by Carol Hall, sung by Rosey Grier and recorded on the album, *"Free to Be . . . You and Me."*

See also: *The Human Side of Human Beings: The Theory of Re-evaluation Counseling*, by Harvey Jackins. Rational Island Publishers, Seattle. (First paperback printing, July, 1972).

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you behave when you were surprised and happy?"

"What did you say and what did you do?"

"How did the other people who were involved seem to feel about your reaction?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the things that you noticed about this session?*

"A Time When I Felt Like Getting Revenge"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

The gut level feelings that prompt human beings to take revenge on one another are usually very strong and compelling. By discussing the urge to take revenge the children will be exposed to its universality and will also be in a position to look deeper into the matter. In this session they will be given a chance to ponder the critical difference between feeling vengeful and doing vengeful acts. They will see how vengeance expresses itself, what the results are, and how the cycle of vengeance may be broken. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think of a time when you felt like 'getting even' with someone for something that they did that bothered, or hurt you, in some way. Tell us about what happened, without telling who the person was, and how you felt."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you think the other person felt after he/she did that to you?"

"What did you do and say when you were having the vengeful feelings?"

"If you retaliated, what happened then?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Are you a bad person if you have vengeful feelings?*
2. *What good does it do a person to get revenge?*
3. *Who is responsible for stopping a situation in which you and someone else keep getting revenge on one another?*

"A Time When I Became Self-Conscious"

We all become self-conscious at one time or other, particularly when we are young. Therefore, this topic is a particularly important one for the children to discuss. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you became self-conscious . . . You started thinking about how you looked, or how you were behaving when you were with others, and maybe you were afraid that they would think that you weren't good enough. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"When you were feeling self-conscious, was it possible to think about anything else?"

"Did feeling self-conscious help you to behave the way you wanted to behave, or look the way you wanted to look?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What do you think you might try the next time you realize that you are starting to feel self-conscious?*

2. *Do you think that perhaps some people may be feeling self-conscious, at times, but they just don't show it?*

"A Time When I Experienced Relief"

This session will provide the children with an opportunity to briefly re-live some tense situation and the feelings that they got when they were relieved. Expect laughter and other forms of physical discharge that generally accompany relief. Begin the session by asking them:

"Think about a time when you were quite worried, or tense, about something that you were afraid might happen, but it didn't happen after all and you were relieved. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"When you were relieved, what happened to your body?"

"How did you behave when the feelings of relief came?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the things that you noticed about this session?*

"Once When I Felt Guilty"

(It is recommended that this session be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Guilt is another unwelcome, universal, human emotion that seems to be unavoidable. All of us at one time or another have felt remorseful about something. Briefly discuss this idea with the children and then ask them:

"Think about a time when you felt guilty about something. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you behave when you felt guilty?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Does it help to remember the things that we did that caused us to feel guilty?*

2. *Does it help to continue to be angry with ourselves after we have made a mistake?*

"A Time When I Felt Powerful"

This session will give each child a chance to talk about feelings of effectiveness and ability to overcome obstacles that they have had. The emphasis in this session should be on times when they used their power constructively. Briefly discuss with the children how our power and effort can be used for positive, or negative results. Then ask them:

> *"Think about a time when you were feeling very strong and powerful, so you did something that you knew would help someone or yourself, in some way. Tell us about it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did your body feel when you felt powerful?"

"How did other people seem to react to your feelings and behavior?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Do powerful feelings just happen by accident or, is there some way that we can* ***choose*** *to be strong and capable? What do you think?*

"A Time When I Felt Hateful"

(It is recommended that this topic be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

Like jealousy, anger, and guilt, hateful feelings are inevitable in human experience, although they may be most unwelcome when they occur. Briefly discuss with the children, how someone who has hateful feelings, or hateful thoughts for a period of time, is not a bad person. If, however, they were to do a hateful action, then we would no doubt call it a bad behavior. Much of the tragedy in the world is brought about by the hateful actions that people do to one another. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think about a time when you felt hateful toward some condition, or some person. (If it was a person, please don't tell us who it was.) Just tell us about the situation and your feelings."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel about yourself when you were having hateful feelings?"

"How did your body feel?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Is the person who feels hate, a terrible person?*
2. *Can people stop themselves from doing hateful actions when they are having hateful feelings?*

"Once When I Was Feeling Loved"

(It is recommended that this session be led by an adult, rather than a child leader.)

By now the children will have discussed a great many human emotions and have had an opportunity to deepen their awareness that all of the emotions are a natural part of the human condition. Today they will turn their attention to the strongest positive emotion of all, love. This topic and the next one, "A Time When I Felt Loving", have been saved for the last so that this unit will end on the most intense positive note possible. Begin the session by emphasizing to the children that every person is deserving of love. Then ask them:

"Think about a time when you knew that someone loved you . . . A time when you were particularly aware that they had loving feelings toward you. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you behave in response?"

"How do you feel right now, about knowing that they love you?"

If children mention someone who loved them temporarily and no longer loves them (such as another child who had a "crush" on them) ask them to think of someone else who knows them well and who loves them now. If you can do it sincerely, and if it will be appropriate (only you know the mood of your group) tell the child who cannot think of anyone who loves him/her you love him/her.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What are some of the things that you noticed about this session?*

"A Time When I Felt Loving"

Being loved inspires us to love. Discuss with the children how we learn to love because someone loves us first. Other people learn to be loving because we have shown them how. Then ask them:

"Think about someone, or something, such as some animal, that you love very much. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you behave toward the person (or animal) that you love?"

"How do you let them know that you love them?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *If you love some person, or some animal, how do you think it will affect him/her?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO EXPLORING FEELINGS:

Creative Writing On A Feeling Topic

Ask the children to pick a topic from this unit and write about it being sure to describe their feelings as well as their experience.

Book, Or News Reports That Focus On Feelings

Ask the children to report on books that they have read (whether in written or verbal form) by making statements not only about the content, but also about how they they think the various characters in the stories were feeling at different points in the stories. News reports can be made with the same focus.

Observing Emotions In Other People

After viewing a film, discuss its content and also ask the class how they think the people in the film were feeling at different points. Discuss the cause and effect relationships between the feelings and the behaviors of each person in the film and how the different people's feelings and behaviors affected each other.

Art: Representing Feeling In Color, Shape And Line

Ask the children to create two pictures conveying opposite feeling moods. The pictures may be of an abstract nature (colors, lines and design), or concrete (people and/or animals doing things). The pictures may be done in whatever medium the children select. When completed, ask them to make a presentation to the class, or to a small group, letting the other children guess what feelings each picture represents. After the children have guessed, the child may tell the group about his/her pictures and how he/she felt when they were being created.

Music: Becoming Aware Of How Melodies And Lyrics Convey Moods

During music appreciation play a variety of classical, pop and modern recordings and discuss each one with the class with respect to the mood that the composer and musicians wished to convey and how the children felt as they listened.

Creative Dramatics: The Portrayal Of Emotions

Ask a number of children to pair off in twos and create, rehearse and present short dramas to the class that will convey a specific feeling. Be sure each pair of children selects a different emotion so that there will be no duplications. By way of offering guidelines, ask the children to enact some kind of scene, or transaction, in which a certain emotion is dramatically shown, although more than one may be observed.

Following each drama ask the class:

"What did you see happening?"

"Have you ever felt like that?"

Then encourage the actors to tell about how they conceptualized the portrayal of the principle emotion that they wished to demonstrate.

UNIT X

MASTERY: DISAPPOINTMENTS, PROBLEMS AND DECISION-MAKING

Everyone faces annoyances, disappointments, problems and the need to make decisions. Many of these kinds of problems that people have are common ones, yet each of us has our own unique collection and sequence. Throughout this unit, the children will be dealing with the notion that there is nothing strange, or bad, or wrong with them if at times they have to face difficult challenges. Besides learning that they are not the only ones who have to deal with problems, the children will also have a chance to explore the feelings that they have about them and to gain practical information about problem-solving processes. They will have the opportunity to find out that it isn't so much the problem itself that matters, but how one views and deals with (masters) a problem, that really counts.

At the outset, the children will be given the opportunity to discuss two topics that deal with things that bother them. They will find that in the context of the circle it is okay for them to express opinions and feelings that are negative. They will then deal with the issue of being disappointed and their power to disappoint others. They will discuss problems and solutions, focusing on the need to realize that problems are hard to solve because of the negative feelings (distress) that so often accompany them, and how one needs to think critically to find rational solutions for his/her problems.

Finally, the children will discuss decision-making. They will talk about how hard it is, at times, to make decisions, how they feel when they are allowed to share in decision-making processes and when they are excluded. They will also discuss the importance of giving careful thought to the decisions they make and remaining committed to them.

The main point in each session is not the disappointments, problems or decisions themselves, but *how* the children arrive at their solutions and decisions, and their feelings concerning them.

Topics on Disappointments, Problems and Decision-Making

"Something That Bugs Me"

"A Time When I Was Disappointed"

"I Disappointed Someone"

"I Disappointed Myself"

"I Had A Problem, But I Solved It"

"How I Would Solve Somebody Else's Problem"

"When Somebody Else Tried To Solve My Problem"

"I Faced A Problem On My Own"

"I Tried To Solve A Problem Too Soon"

"A Problem That I Can't Solve"

"I Made A Decision That Was Easy To Make"

"When I Did Not Get To Share In Making The Decision"

"When I Got To Share In Making The Decision"

"I Didn't Want To Have To Make A Decision"

"I Thought It Over And Then Decided"

"I Stuck By A Difficult Decision That I Made"

"Something That Bugs Me"

Today the children will have an opportunity to get some of their vexations and frustrations "off their chests." By initially discussing things that "bug" them, the children will begin this unit with the understanding that everyone becomes bothered at one time or another by something.

This is a particularly valuable session, especially for those children who very infrequently express dissatisfaction, for whatever reason. These children will learn that it is okay to express a negative feeling and opinion in certain contexts and the other children may come to see these children more realistically.

At the outset, briefly discuss how everybody deals with things that bother them and how the people who generally seem to get along well have found reasonable ways to handle their annoyances. Begin the participation phase by telling the children:

> *"Today we are going to have a chance to talk about things that bother us. Think about something that "bugs" you and tell the group about it. (Be sure not to tell the name of the person, if it is a person, that "bugs" you)".*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"What would you like to do about the situation if you could do anything that you wanted?"*
>
> *"What might be a more realistic thing to do about the situation than doing anything that you would want to do?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What were the similarities that you noticed among this group with respect to the kinds of things that "bug" us?*
2. *What differences did you notice?*

"A Time When I Was Disappointed"

This is a topic that was suggested by a fifth grader. Being disappointed is something that children have to deal with often since they are not in a position to acquire, and/or do, everything that they would like. Begin the session by asking them:

> *"Think about a time when you were disappointed about something. Possibly you wanted to get something and you didn't get it, or you wanted to go somewhere and you didn't get to go. Tell us about what happened."*

At the outset, remind them not to mention names. As they participate, ask them:

> *"How did you react when you were disappointed?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *When you were feeling disappointed, did you ever feel like no one else could have suffered as much as you were suffering?*

"I Disappointed Someone"

Yesterday the children discussed how they have felt disappointment that someone else caused. Today they are possibly more ready to "own" how they disappointed someone else. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Tell us about a time when you were in a position to do something for someone, or give them something, but you didn't do it. Tell us about how you disappointed them."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"How did you know that the person was disappointed?"*
>
> *"How did it make you feel to know that you had disappointed them?"*
>
> *"How do you feel about it now?"*

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

> *1. Do you have the power to disappoint people?*

"I Disappointed Myself"

The most serious kind of disappointment is when we have disappointed ourselves. Awareness on the part of the children with respect to this kind of insight may be extremely varied. Some may not think of a single time when they felt disappointed in themselves, and others may be painfully sensitive to their own limitations. In either case, treat the topic as matter-of-factly as all the others. Begin the session by asking the children:

> *"Think about a time when you expected something of yourself, but you did not meet your own expectations. Tell us about what happened."*

As the children participate, ask them:

> *"Besides being disappointed, what other kinds of feelings did you get?"*

Instead of reviewing what each person said today, ask the children:

> *"As we go around the circle, will each person, briefly, tell about something that you accomplished recently that you feel good about."*

After those children who wish to tell about something that they accomplished and felt good about have had a chance to do so, ask the children:

> *1. What were the things that you noticed in this session?*

"I Had A Problem But I Solved It"

Today's session will begin with a series relating to problem solving on a positive note. By telling about their own solutions to problems that they were having, the children will be accepting the notion that "we all have problems." Begin the participation phase by asking the children:

> *"Think about some kind of a problem that you had once, that you solved. Tell us about the problem and how you solved it."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel while you were having the problem?"

"What kind of feeling did you get when you found out that your solution was working?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Are all problems so difficult that there are no solutions?*

2. *Are all problems so simple that there is always an easy solution?*

"How I Would Solve Somebody Else's Problem"

It is always easy for people to figure out solutions to the problems that others have. Today the children will talk about how they were able to see solutions for other people's problems. They will also discuss why it is so easy for us to be able to solve somebody else's problem, and so hard for us to solve our own. Begin the participation phase by asking the children:

"Have you ever known somebody who had a problem when the solution seemed simple to you, and you felt like you knew exactly what they needed to do about their problem? Tell the group about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did the person seem to be feeling about his/her problem?"

"What kind of feelings did you have about the problem?"

"If you told the person what you thought they ought to do, how did they react?"

Expect a wide variety in experiences. Some children may report that their solutions were hardly even listened to by the person with the problem. And some may report the opposite reaction. The solution may have been most helpful. In these latter cases, ask the children:

"How did it make you feel about yourself when (your friend accepted the money you loaned to her)?"

Discuss how many times we don't really know the solution for someone else's problem, but when we try to help them we *are* showing them that we care.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Why do you think it's so easy for someone who doesn't have the problem to know what a solution might be?*

2. *Why is it sometimes very hard for a person who has a problem to figure out what to do about it?*

"When Somebody Else Tried To Solve My Problem"

Today the children will talk about how it feels when they are the one who has the problem and somebody else seems to know what the solution should be. Begin the participation phase by asking the children:

"Think about a time when you had a problem and somebody else felt that they knew what you should do about it. Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How were you feeling about your problem?"

"Did the other person seem to feel the same way that you did about the problem?"

"Did they help you?"

"How did you feel about someone else telling you what they think you should do?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Why do you think it was so easy for the other people that we told about to know how to solve the problems that we had?*

2. *Why was it hard for us to know what to do?*

"I Faced A Problem On My Own"

Today the children will talk about a time when they had a problem and they faced it. This is an important issue in the lives of children. Very often, when people refuse to acknowledge their problems, they suffer a great deal because later on their problems just get worse. Briefly discuss this idea with the children and then ask them:

"Think about a time when you had a problem and instead of running away from it, or pretending that it wasn't there, you faced it and did something about it. Tell us what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did the problem make you feel?"

"How do you feel right now, knowing that you faced your problem and did something about it?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *What can sometimes happen when someone who has a problem doesn't face it?*

2. *Is it easy to face problems?*

3. *Do some problems ever just "work themselves out"?*

"I Tried To Solve A Problem Too Soon"

Problem-solving is a complex matter. Sometimes the problems that we have become more severe when we don't face them. Sometimes we run into trouble with problems when we are too anxious to resolve them. In the latter case, there are some kinds of problems that cannot be solved until "all the facts are in" and /or a number of alternatives or options have been considered. Briefly discuss these ideas with the children. Then begin the participation phase by asking them:

"Have you ever had a problem that you were very anxious to solve? You did what you decided to do, but later you realized that you had been in too much of a hurry to solve the problem? It could be that something else happened that would have helped, but it was too late, or, later on, a better solution came up. Tell us about what happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How were you feeling about the problem?"

"Looking back on what happened, how would you have solved the problem differently if you could do it over again?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *How long should people wait before they decide on a solution for their problems?*
2. *Does it do us any good to remember mistakes we made?*
3. *Does it do us any good to remain annoyed with ourselves when we make a mistake?*

"A Problem That I Can't Solve"

Today the children will discuss some of the current frustrations that they may be having with respect to problems that they are dealing with at present.

Begin the session by discussing how all of us have unsolved problems and remind the children that it is not relevent in the session to tell who the people are that may be involved in their problems. Begin the participation phase by asking them:

"Think about a problem that you have right now that for some reason or other, you can't solve. It might be because you do not have the knowledge or ability to solve the problem, or it might be something that isn't even ***your*** *problem. Tell us about what it is."*

As the children participate, ask them:

"How do you feel about the problem?"

In the case of children who may be frustrated because a problem exists in their lives and as you perceive it, they truly did not cause it, nor do they have the power to do anything about it, ask:

"Is it your fault that this problem exists? Is there really anything that you could do to solve it?"

In these cases help the child to realize that he/she does not have any responsibility in having caused, or for solving the problem. Help the child to see that there are ways that he/she can look at the situation without being too hard on him/herself.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *If someone has a problem that they can't solve, are they a bad person?*
2. *Do you think that all problems are solved with a simple solution?*
3. *Do some problems ever become easier to solve if you "let them be" for awhile?*

"I Made A Decision That Was Easy To Make"

Today the children will enter the topic realm of decision-making, and will begin by telling about a decision that they made that caused them little difficulty.

Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about a time when you had to make some kind of a decision, that was easy to make, and tell us about it."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel about making the decision?"

"As you look back on it, how do you feel about the decision now?"

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *Are all decisions that we make easy?*

2. *Are all decisions that we make difficult?*

"When I Did Not Get To Share In Making The Decision"

This session provides the children with an opportunity to articulate their feelings and the reasons for how they feel when they are not permitted to share in the decision-making process. One of the major benefits of today's activity is that by increasing the children's communicative skills, their ability to constructively negotiate at a verbal level is strengthened. As the children's communicative skills increase, they can enter into more meaningful discussions about the decision-making process. They will be much less prone to resort to destructive behavior as a way of expressing their feelings when they are not included in decision-making. Begin the session by discussing this idea with the children. Then ask them:

"Think of a time when a decision needed to be made that would affect you, but you were not asked for your opinion. Instead, other people (it isn't important who) made the decision and you did not get to share in the process. Tell us about it."

As the children participate, be sure not to become involved in discussions regarding the possible validity or non-validity of decisions that were made, rather focus on how the child felt, by asking:

"How did you feel about being left out of the decision-making process?"

Following a review, culminate by asking:

1. *Is it useful to be able to talk about how it feels to be left out of the decision-making process?*

2. *With your ability to explain your opinions and feelings, what could you do the next time you feel that you might get left out of making a decision that will affect you?*

"When I Got To Share In Making The Decision"

One of the key ingredients in social relationships is the degree to which people share in making decisons. When people share equally in the decision-making process they feel important and respected. But, when people have decisions made for them, they feel that they are not seen as being important.

The purpose of this activity is to bring sharply into each child's awareness an understanding of this wish to share in decision-making and to continue to promote the language necessary to articulately express feelings about this focal issue in social relationships. Begin this session by discussing these ideas. Then ask the children:

"Think about a time when a decision was going to be made that would affect you and you were asked to tell what you thought would be the best decision. You were consulted, and what you said was taken into consideration. Tell us how it happened."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel when you got to share in making the decision?"

Following a review, culminate by asking the children:

1. *If you are in charge of some situation that involves other people and a decision needs to be made that will affect them, what would be a fair thing for you to do?*

"I Didn't Want To Have To Make A Decision"

This topic is a very important one. Similar to not wanting to face problems, people often don't want to be committed to decisions. It is an issue that everyone has to deal with at one time or other. The child who understands that sometimes he/she must make decisions is far ahead of many people who do not seriously grapple with this reality until later on in life. Begin the session by asking the children:

"Think about a time when you felt like you were put on the spot in some kind of a situation. Possibly, your friends wanted you to do something but you didn't want to do it, so you felt trapped. Or, possibly, you were having a hard time choosing between two things. Tell us about how you didn't want to have to make a decision."

As the children participate, ask them:

"What was the feeling you had, when you realized that you needed to make a decision?"

"How do you feel about it right now?"

Very often individuals will say that they had no feelings. This is consistent with the fact that they were probably making themselves as unaware as possible of the situation, so that they would not have to experience any kind of suffering. Discuss with the children how people tend to do this sometimes, yet have to face making decisions that are hard to make at one time or other.

Following a review, culminate the session by asking the children:

1. *What usually happens when we just don't make any kind of decision at all?*

2. *Is it possible to rush too quickly into a decision before waiting to make sure of what's really going on?*

"I Thought It Over And Then Decided"

This is a very important activity because it reinforces the concept that consideration should precede decisions if they are going to be effective and responsible ones. The children receive dual benefits in this session by first, focusing on this value and, secondly, by telling about a time when they thought something over before making a decision.

Tell the children that we are concerned today with how our ability to think helps us. Discuss the topic briefly and then ask them:

"Think of a time when you made a decision that you carefully thought over first. Tell us about what went into making your decision."

As the children participate, ask them:

"How did you feel before making the decision?"

"How did you feel afterward?"

Discuss how often there are complexities to be looked at and compromises to be made. Mixed feelings are often the result.

Following a brief review, summarize by asking the children:

1. *Someone once said, "**When you keep from making a decision — that's a decision.**" What do you think this means?*

■ (This last question need not be answered now. Write it on the board and ask the children to think about it. Conduct the session with the topic, "I Stuck By A Difficult Decision I Made," tomorrow.)

"I Stuck By A Difficult Decision That I Made"

Begin today's session with a brief discussion of the final question from the activity which preceded this one, *"Someone once said, 'When you keep from making a decision — that's a decision.' What do you think this means?"* Focus on how difficult decisions can sometimes be, but how frequently things sooner or later get worse if a decision is put off. To carry this idea further, ask the group:

"Have you ever made a difficult decision and then stuck to it?"

"How do you feel about it now?"

Throughout the session, focus on how our minds can serve us well and how good it is to know that we have the ability to use our will power and be in charge of our behavior.

After reviewing, ask the children:

1. *What can happen when people pretend that there isn't a problem and keep from making a decision?*

2. *What can happen when they don't stick by important decisions that they do make?*

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO DISAPPOINTMENTS, PROBLEMS AND DECISION MAKING:

Creative Dramatics And Class Discussions: Problems, Advice And Decisions

Select one child for each of the following dramatic situations and have him/her select two to four other children to help enact a short extemporaneous drama for the class. Each drama should portray the dynamics of each of the following problems. One of the characters in the drama should be the person with the problem. Another should be a person standing nearby who gives "off-the-wall" advice freely. The other characters may be the other people involved in the problem situation, usually the injured parties. After having a period of time to prepare their dramas, ask each group to perform it in front of the class. The child in charge may inform the audience about each setting and what character each actor is playing prior to the drama.

You have broken something at a relative's home. Should you tell them or not?

You were playing in the yard and you accidently smashed some of your parent's prized flowers. What should you do about it?

You know a child who says he wants to run away from home. What should you do?

You are trying to hide a surprise gift that you got for someone and they ask you, "What are you doing?" What would you tell the person?

You want to work on a dog house that you are building. It will require some loud hammering, but the people next door work nights and sleep during the day. What should you do?

Following each drama, ask the class the following questions:

What did you see happening?"

"How do you think the person with the problem felt?"

"How did (the injured party) seem to feel?"

"Did the person giving advice help or not?"

"Was the solution that the child reached, a good one in your opinion?"

At this point, ask the class to name several other alternative solutions that the person with the problem could have tried. Finally, the class should vote on the best alternative.

Discuss the matter of giving advice. How easy it is to do, yet how often a solution, which is appropriate for the giver of advice, misses the mark for the person with the problem. Discuss also how giving advice can stifle people who need to be listened to. They don't need advice, they need attention so that they can work out the problem for themselves as they talk about it. (The Communication Stoppers Exercise on advice, page 30, demonstrates this.)

After the class has seen and discussed all of the dramas, ask the students to suggest other hypothetical situations and ask the class to come up with alternative solutions for them.

Art: Creating Imaginative Solutions

Give each child in the classroom a piece of blank paper. With their crayolas, ask them to pick a color and make a nondescript wavy or jagged line (a squiggle) somewhere on the paper. Then ask the children to give their papers to someone seated near them. Each child will then be faced with a problem situation, a challenge, requiring them to use the squiggle as a basis, or foundation, for the creation of a picture. Urge them to be as imaginative as they feel and to add onto the squiggle whatever comes to their minds.

Creative Writing: Stories For Smaller Children

Ask the children in your class to write a short story in manuscript printing for younger children in a primary class, entitled, "How (Annie the Anteater) Became Disappointed" or "How (Tommy the Turtle) Solved His Problem." Urge them to be as imaginative as possible, in creating their stories. (They may, of course, change the titles — names of characters, or make any other changes they wish.)

They may also illustrate their stories. When the stories are completed, build the guide the class through the process of deciding which primary class to give the stories to. Then bind the stories into a book and allow some of the children in your class to present the book to the primary class.

A Class Decision

Tell the class that you are going to explain a problem to them that isn't real. Ask them to think about the problem and be ready to participate in making a class decision related to the problem, which is as folows:

> *"The manager of the local amusement park has given our class two free tickets that would allow the ticket holders free admission to the park and all the free rides they wanted. How would you go about selecting who would receive the tickets?"*

As the children begin to react, briefly jot down their ideas on the board. After all of the ideas that the class can think of are listed, ask them to vote on the method that they think is best for selecting the two children to receive the imaginary tickets.

APPENDICES

A . . . . . "Warm Fuzzy" Awareness Topics

B . . . . . Transcript of a Minimally Edited Tape Recording of an Actual Circle Session Led by a Child in the Fifth Grade.

C . . . . . A list of Affective Vocabulary.

D . . . . . The "Communication Stopper" Scripts.

APPENDIX A

"Warm Fuzzy" Awareness Topics

These topics are good ones for initial sessions with new groups. They are also good for Mondays and the first day the group is back together again after a vacation. Be sure to clarify each topic when you announce it. Jog the children's memories by asking them to think back to a *certain* warm summer day, for example. Ask them to tell how they felt, what they were doing and other questions of this nature.

"On A Warm Summer Day I Feel . . ."

"My Pet" or "If I Had A Pet It Would Be"

"Something That Delighted Me"

"In the Rain I Feel . . ."

"At Sunset I Feel . . ."

"Little Puppies Make Me Feel . . ."

"A Time I Was Laughing And Couldn't Stop"

"If I Were On The Beach (Or Lake, River, Etc.) Right Now"

"My Favorite Song Is . . ."

"The Smell of Fresh Baked Bread Makes Me Feel . . ."

"A Thrilling Moment In My Life"

"A Gift I Enjoyed Giving"

"The Funniest Movie I've Ever Seen"

"A Nice Experience That I Want To Share"

"When I Look At Trees I Feel . . ."

"Warm Sun On My Body Feels . . ."

"A Friendly Arm On My Shoulder Feels . . ."

"Kittens Make Me Feel . . ."

"A Time When I Felt Happy"

"A Pleasant Surprise"

"A Gift I Liked The Most" (That I Received)

"A Time When I Was Alone And It Felt Good"

"A Dream I Had That Was Nice"

APPENDIX B

Transcript of a Minimally Edited Tape Recording of an Actual Circle Session led by a Child in the Fifth Grade

The topic for this session is "Something That I Think Is Beautiful," which is presented in the first Awareness unit, Levels V and VI. It lasts about 25 minutes and is led by a child in the fifth grade. The children participating in the session are her peers and the adult present is Geraldine Ball, who is involved as the leader-trainer.

The group has experienced approximately twenty-seven bi-weekly sessions prior to this one, the last sixteen of which were led by children, who were learning the leadership role. This session is the third one that Cheryl, the child leader, has led. The children were told what the topic would be for this session two days beforehand.

The specific objective for this session is to provide an opportunity for children to (1) increase their articulate awareness of at least one thing that is aesthetically pleasing to them, and (2) to realize that everyone does not see beauty in exactly the same things, nor do they respond to the same things that they see as beautiful in exactly the same ways.

The session takes place in a semi-secluded, carpeted area in a corner of the classroom with the children seated on the floor. The class is run on an "open classroom" model. The other children are present and busily engaged in learning experiences that require consultation with one another and their teacher, who is working with them.

Besides the verbal transactions, a number of other things were going on in the circle, such as attention, interest, laughter and enjoyment. It is regrettable that these affective expressions could not be recorded too.

The children's names have been changed.

Cheryl: The topic for today is, uh . . . "Something That I Think Is Beautiful." Anybody have something that they think is beautiful? Davy?

Davy: My dog.

Cheryl: Why do you think your dog is beautiful?

Davy: The way she runs.

Cheryl: Does she run fast?

Davy: She runs fast with an even stride. Like, when her two front legs are out and her back legs are . . . back, . . . she just looks beautiful. Like that (makes hand and body motions) she's goin'. . .

Cheryl: Davy, what is your feeling when you see her run?

Davy: I'm happy, 'cause I have a good dog.

Cheryl: Lucy?

Lucy: I think my dog and cat are beautiful. One . . . we have a dog that is very rare . . . there's hardly any like her. She's so beautiful, she's . . . she . . . you don't have to train her to stretch out but you do have to train her to point. And she knows how to sit. You have to train her to wait, and she does such pretty tricks, like if you put a ball on her nose, she'll catch it. And she's just such a beautiful dog.

Cheryl: What about your cat?

Lucy: Well, she's a mixed breed of a Calico, and a Persian or something like that. And she's got a ringed tail, blue eyes and she's so pretty. You've never seen anything like her.

Cheryl: Does anybody else have something that they think is beautiful? No . . . wait a minute . . . what is your feeling when you look at your dog as he does a trick and you look at your cat?

Lucy: Well, I just think that they're rare.

Cheryl: Okay, anybody else? Bonnie?

Bonnie: Well, I have a little cousin. She's adopted, but I think that she looks so much like her sister. And I think she's really cute and she's smart and when . . . my brother has a crush on her . . . and when . . . whenever . . .

Cheryl: How old is your brother?

Bonnie: My brother is four and she's three . . . and whenever they play together, she's so wild, but then when she comes over to our house, she's just so cute. And she likes to be held and my feeling is . . . it's fun to have her around.

Cheryl: Okay. Does anybody else have one?

Daniel: I've got one . . . a question for Bonnie.

Cheryl: Okay, Daniel.

Daniel: Well, when you talk about your cousin . . . She's adopted . . . When you say she looks like her sister, is her sister adopted?

Bonnie: No . . . but she just resembles her.

Cheryl: Does anybody else have one? . . . Well I have one. We always go to the beach and we'd stay there all day, and at the end of the day, when we're sitting on the sand, the waves are barely even moving . . . you know, they're sloshing. . . they're sloshing on the sand. And the sunset is really pretty and you look out over the water and all the lights are shining on the water and it's not pitch dark yet, and you can see the sun reflecting on the water and the sunset . . . I think it's really pretty. And my feeling is comfortable and um . . . relaxed sort of . . . Does anybody else have one? Davy?

Davy: I have another one. When we were at the beach . . . I uh . . . Everybody was yelling, 'sharks', 'cause there were like four fins sticking up out of the water and then all of a sudden these dolphins started jumping into the air. And it looked really pretty . . . they were doing tricks and everything.

Cheryl: What was your feeling when you saw them jumping and doing tricks?

Davy: I don't know, I just . . . I don't know. I just felt happy, I guess.

Cheryl: Lucy?

Lucy: Well I have another one . . . and that reminded me of it. Yesterday I was baby-sitting for a baby. He's the cutest little thing. I think he looks really pretty when he's just laying there laughing, and rolling around and everything.

Cheryl: What is your feeling when you see him giggling, and playing?

Lucy: Oh . . . I just feel all happy inside 'cause he's so cute.

Cheryl: Excited, sort of?

Lucy: Yeah.

Cheryl: Anybody else have one? Ms. Ball?

Ms. Ball: Well, I was thinking about something that I think is beautiful and I really think a lot of things are beautiful and so it's hard to pick one thing. But something that lately I've begun to appreciate the beauty of . . . is other people. And when I was younger I never used to really think of other people as being that beautiful. And . . . uh . . . now I really think that other people are beautiful. Even people who you might not think of as being a a beautiful person like they might have some funny thing about them that people might say, "Hey, that's an ugly thing." Well, I don't even see those things anymore in people, I just see . . . I just try to see, and now I don't have to even try very hard, it just happens . . . It happens that I see their eyes sparkle when they smile, and just the neat things about them. Everybody does have something beautiful . . . every single person is beautiful in their own way.

Cheryl: (Begins to sing "Everybody's Beautiful In Their Own Way . . .")

Ms. Ball: Yes. That song says it.

Cheryl: Okay. Daniel do you have anything?

Daniel: Well, don't laugh or anything, but . . . Well, I like airplanes a lot. I think they're beautiful because of the way they're shaped . . . especially the PSA planes because they have a smile. It looks like a dog and it goes like that. (Makes hand motions.) It goes up . . . and it looks like a flying dog or something . . . It's real neat.

Cheryl: What is your feeling when you're in a plane taking off . . . or you see a plane take off?

Daniel: Well, it reminds me of . . . Like, it looks like a dog, letting people go inside of it and then it takes them where they want to go.

Cheryl: Lucy?

Lucy: I wanted to say something . . . My Dad has a plane like that and he tried to make it smile. It looks like this . . . (makes hand motions) . . . half a triangle, and whenever it's flying, it has like this big man on top and whenever you look up, that nose is coming flat down. it has a weird smile.

Cheryl: Does anybody else have anything before we go on? Leah?

Leah: Well, what I think is beautiful is wild horses when they run and everything . . . I think they're pretty.

Cheryl: What kind of horse is your favorite?

Leah: I don't know . . . Well, for a wild horse it's got to be a mustang. . . I like palominos too.

Cheryl: What's your feeling when you see the horses running?

Leah: I just feel kind of free, you know what I mean? It's kind of hard to explain . . .

Cheryl: Anybody else? Raymond?

Raymond: Well, when we went to Hawaii, we saw the Hawaii Volcanos, and I thought those really looked neat. When the fire went on the rocks it make a kind of weird purple, sort of . . . purple and orange . . . and it really looked neat.

Cheryl: Okay, what was your feeling when you saw the volcano?

Raymond: Well, I thought it looked really neat and also those rocks looked really pretty. I just liked to look at them.

Cheryl: I think everyone has had a turn. Who can tell Bonnie what she said? Leah?

Leah: Well, when her little cousin comes . . . when *your* little cousin comes down, you think she's really cute and everything, but she gets sort of wild when she plays with your brother, and he has a crush on her. But then she settles down after a while and you think she's really cute and she likes you to pick her up and stuff.

Bonnie: (Nods agreement.)

Cheryl: Okay, who can tell Lucy what she said? Raymond?

Raymond: Well, she baby-sitted . . . sat, once and the boy was seven months old. I don't know who it was . . . but you said he was really cute and everything and you just like it when he giggled and he sounds really neat.

Cheryl: Okay, what was the feeling?

Raymond: Well, uh . . . she thought that he was really cute and she liked baby-sitting him . . .

Cheryl: Okay, what was the feeling?

Raymond: Well, uh . . . she thought that he was really cute and she liked baby-sitting him . . .

Cheryl: She was sort of excited when she babysat him . . .

Lucy: (Nods head.)

Raymond: Yeah . . .

Cheryl: Okay, who can tell Daniel what he said? Davy?

Davy: Well, you said you liked airplanes . . . the way that they're shaped. And, you liked the smiles on PSAs. They remind him of a dog and he things that they're real nice because they let people go inside of them and fly around, and . . . he just likes them.

Daniel: (Nods agreement.)

Cheryl: Okay . . . And that's his feeling too. Who can tell Ms. Ball what she said? Lucy?

Lucy: She said that people were beautiful . . . *You* said that you thought people were beautiful and you used to have to really try, but now it just comes to you that when they smile, you see sparkles in their eyes and what explains your feeling is the song, "Everything is Beautiful."

Ms. Ball: Uh huh . . . that's right, thank you.

Cheryl: Okay, who can tell me what I said? Leah?

Leah: Well, I really liked yours. You felt that the ocean was beautiful 'cause you were at the beach one day, and the sun was setting, and it was reflecting on the water and the ocean was just really wavy and pretty and you really liked it.

Cheryl: Right. Okay, who can tell Raymond what he said? Lucy?

Lucy: Well, what Raymond likes is the Island, Hawaii, and what he thought was pretty there were the volcanoes. I don't know if they erupted or not . . . but he thought they were pretty . . . There was lava or something . . . some kind of something from the volcano. It came down on the rocks, and it turned purple and orange and it just really looked pretty. And that's what he liked to look at.

Cheryl: Was that your feeling?

Raymond: Yeah.

Cheryl: Who can tell Leah what she said? I will. Okay, I think *yours* is really neat 'cause I like horses and, when I grow up I . . . I almost said when I grow up I want to be a horse! (laughter) Okay, I want to be a *horseback rider*. And about Leah, you said you liked wild horses because you like to see them run . . . palominos and mustangs. I don't know why . .. but you really like horses and your feeling was free.

Leah: Yeah.

Cheryl: Okay, who can tell Davy what he said? Daniel?

Daniel: Well, your second one was . . . you were at the beach and everyone was yelling, "Shark! Shark!" So everyone ran out of the water, 'cause the fins were sticking up, but it was really some dolphins, And you thought it was pretty 'cause they were doing all kinds of tricks and jumping out of the water. And it looked like they were having fun.

Davy: (Nods to Daniel.)

Cheryl: Okay. Let's go into the summary then, and Ms. Ball is going to take over the summary today.

Ms. Ball: Okay, the first question is, um . . . after listening to everyone talking, about the different things that we think are beautiful . . . would say that everyone sees beauty in exactly the same way . . .?

Several Children Respond: No . . .

Lucy: No, not really. You know, beauty is something that you like on your own. Like, almost everything is beautiful in its own way. Different people see it different ways. 'Cause in there's different things you like, and there's different things you don't like.

Ms. Ball: Good, Lucy . . . Bonnie?

Bonnie: People see beauty in people or beauty in animals. There are different things that make people feel happy.

Ms. Ball: Right. Thank you. Daniel?

Daniel: Well, like that picture, right there. Some people can see it as a beautiful design and some people can see it as a spider.

Ms. Ball: Uh huh . . . Okay, Davy?

Davy: Well, in some things people can say "Hey look at this" and then they may say, "Hey, yeah, that's a pretty . . . that's a beautiful fish, you know, it's really beautiful." And other people might say, it's not a fish, it's a horse . . . something like that.

Ms. Ball: Well, yeah. The idea, again, is . . . whatever is beautiful . . . Is that what you mean?

Davy: Yeah.

Ms. Ball: Leah?

Leah: Well, you can almost see how Cheryl and Raymond said, they're the type that likes landscapes and stuff . . . and like you enjoy people, for what they are . . .

Ms. Ball: But that doesn't mean that I don't enjoy landscapes or they don't enjoy people.

Leah: Yeah, but Lucy and Davy and I all had a . . . an animal and we all said it in a different way 'cause . . . it's rare, and it's really beautiful and the way it can do tricks. And Davy likes his because it runs and because it's his. And I love mine because I like it . . . when they're running. It looks so pretty . . . we all like the same things, but we all like them in different ways.

Ms. Ball: Gee, I think you've made a very good point. Even when you have the same thing you might like it for different reasons or feel different ways about it. Thanks, Leah. Raymond, you had your hand up.

Raymond: Well, I had about the same thing to say that Leah said, but I had a question for Daniel also. What do you mean about the spider?

Daniel: The art . . . (points to a poster on a bulletin board).

Raymond: Oh . . . 'cause I thought you meant that other one. It looks like a web.

Ms. Ball: Yeah . . . like a web . . . Okay, there was one other question. Do you think this kind of session helps us to get to know each other better, and if so, in what way? Lucy?

Lucy: It does, because, it helps you know what the other person feels. It helps, like if you are playing with them . . . Like if I was playing with Sharon, I don't know what she likes. And I'd say, I don't like doing this . . . or let's sew, and she hates it . . . she'll be nice and say "okay" and sit there an hour and do two stitches . . . just trying to be polite. But with this session, you know what the person likes so that you can have a good time with them.

Ms. Ball: Like, it helps you to be a better friend?

Lucy: Uh huh . . .

Ms. Ball: Okay Daniel . . . What did you want to say?

Daniel: Well mine is kind of like Lucy's . . . You can . . . if mine is like Raymond's, then I know I have something in common with him . . . like that.

Ms. Ball: You find out who has the same kinds of things in common with you. Okay, has everyone said everything they want to say? Okay. Who's going to tell Cheryl some things that you thought were good in the session . . . the way that she lead it. Okay, Bonnie?

Bonnie: She did better.

Ms. Ball: Okay, Lucy.

Lucy: Well, she usually remembered to say, "Who will tell the person what he or she said?"

Ms. Ball: She remembered to word it in the special way that helps. Okay, good. Uh huh, Leah?

Leah: I just have something that might help her. Like . . .

Ms. Ball: Hold that one for a minute. Do you have anything about the way she did it that you thought was good that you'd like to tell?

Leah: Well, she moved around a little, but . . .

Lucy: She didn't move around that much!

Leah: Well, she jumped on the bean bag chair.

Cheryl: Well, I had to . . . there was sand down my pants. (Laughter.)

Ms. Ball: Actually, she did hold much stiller than she did the very first time she led the session. But this time she was very calm by comparison. Okay, I want to tell you Cheryl, what I liked about the way you did it. You did some things that were very helpful. You said, "How did you feel when such and such . . ." You know, you tied those remarks into what we were saying. That proves that you were not only leading, but you were listening . . . both at the same time. That isn't easy to do. Okay . . . any helpful suggestions? Davy?

Davy: Well, I heard her interrupting in the first part of the session.

Ms. Ball: When was that . . . when she sang that time?

Kids: No . . . she was just interrupting.

Ms. Ball: Okay, anybody else?

Lucy: It was a good session.

Ms. Ball: Yeah. Thanks to all of you for being a part of it.

(A discussion regarding the next topic and child-leader followed, but was not taped.)

CRITIQUE OF THE SESSION BY THE LEADER-TRAINER:

I enjoyed being a part of this circle session very much. My general reaction to it is that it very successfully met the overall aims of the program, i.e., giving everyone a chance to participate who wished to, effecting an environment in which positive communication skills were practiced, and providing an opportunity for children to link an affective experience with cognitive understandings. By sharing something that they consider to be beautiful and listening to the things shared by the other children, each child had an opportunity to become more self-aware and to realize that each person perceives and responds to beauty in his/her own unique way. Thus, in my opinion, the specific objectives of this activity were also met.

The participation phase of the session went well, with everyone sharing at least once. When Cheryl told about being at the beach, Davy was reminded of an experience that he once had at the beach. This frequently happens when participation begins. The participants awaken memories in one another.

Daniel's opening remark, "Don't laugh or anything," when he started to participate was meaningful. In essence, he was asking for the group's acceptance of the thoughts and feelings he was about to share. This underscores how important it is that the circle be a safe, accepting environment.

It is interesting to note that in some cases it was difficult for the children to get in touch with their feelings. Some of them responded to the question, "How did you feel?" with a response that described their thoughts. This points to the assumption that throughout their experiences in school, up to now, the children's feelings were probably not focused upon as contributing to their learning experiences and their ability to articulate their feelings was probably not given much direct attention. It is probably safe to say that awareness of feelings generally does not develop in children as a result of their experiences in typical, or traditional, school systems. If awareness does become developed in some children, it is probably not because the learning processes at school had anything to do with it. We believe that awareness is vital to mental health. We also believe that individuals are less prone to behave impulsively and irresponsibly and are better equipped to make rational choices when they are aware of their feelings. It is our premise that each time children in school are asked to tell about their feelings as a valid part of their learning experiences, something significant is happening. In the twenty seven sessions that this group has experienced together, their ability to identify and express their feelings has increased noticeably.

The review, in which the children briefly told each other what they heard each other say, demonstrates that the children have been developing their listening skills. Their responses to one another were direct in most cases. (They said, "*You* told about . . . *You* felt . . .) This is something that they have been encouraged to do, so that they will get experience in interacting directly with one another, instead of funneling their remarks through someone else. In ths way the communication is personal. The positive reinforcement that comes from being listened to and from listening comes through person-to-person contact.

At the culmination of the session the responses of the children to questions about the activity's intent, demonstrated that several of them were motivated to verbalize what the meaning of the session was for them. Some of their remarks are very insightful, in my opinion. It should be pointed out that the purpose of these culminating questions is to provoke thought. Meaningful discussions may occur in response to these questions, but this should be entirely up to the children. As the group of children have met together in the circle, they have become increasingly responsive to the questions verbally. At first their responses were rather minimal.

With respect to the leadership of the session, I think that Cheryl did a good job. She was alert to the desire of the children to participate, she kept the session moving, she handled digressions well, bringing the attention of the children who had digressed back to the major focus of the session in a tactful manner, and most important of all, she *listened* to the children as they spoke.

On the negative side, Cheryl often asked closed-ended questions. ("Does your dog run fast?" "How old is your brother?", etc.) which generally end the flow of communication because the answer required is brief and usually final. Open-ended questions, ("Would you tell us more about that?" "What else would you like to say about it?") generally produce a very different response. The door is open by these kinds of questions for the person who is speaking to express their thoughts in whatever way they choose. To expect Cheryl to have the sophistication to ask only open-ended questions would be unreasonable, however. She has not, as yet, been exposed to these ideas about question-asking. A task for me, then, is to continue to initiate brief discussions prior to each circle, which deal with ways to improve communication and leadership. A discussion of this nature regarding open and closed-ended questions will be undertaken soon. It should be pointed out that Cheryl did remember to ask each child the most important question of all: How did you *feel* when . . .?"

To critique the leader-trainer, I believe that this session demonstrates that the effort I put in when the group began to meet is now "paying off." The children understand the format and are comfortable with it. They understand the ground rules and have come to see the value in abiding by them, although at first, it was not always easy for them to do so. At various points, I had to gently, but firmly, insist that only positive modes of interacting be practiced.

On the negative side, as I read this transcription, I found that I did two things that I will try not to do in any more sessions. The first one relates to my response to the topic during the participation phase of the session. It would have been better if I had told about seeing beauty in a certain person after getting to know him or her, than to speak in general terms about how everyone is beautiful. Telling about this kind of experience would have been much more personal. It is interesting to note that all of the children told about specific things that they found to be beautiful (or pretty) whereas the adult tended to generalize and without realizing it, approached the delivery of a mini-sermon. Secondly, at various points, I rated, or judged, statements that children made during the culmination. Instead of saying, "Right," or "Good," a simple nod, or a statement of appreciation to them for sharing their thoughts would have been appropriate, where evaluating their remarks is inappropriate in a circle session.

APPENDIX C

A List of Affective Vocabulary

The words listed here are from *The Language of Emotion*,[1] which includes information about each word, where these emotions "come from" and what happens to a person physically when each one is being experienced.

Admiration		Irritation
Affection	Elation	Jealousy
Amusement	Embarrassment	Love
Anger	Enjoyment	Nervousness
Anxiety	Excitement	Panic
Apathy	Fear	Passion
Awe	Friendliness	Pity
Boredom	Frustration	Pride
Cheerfulness	Gaiety	Relief
Confidence	Gratitude	Remorse
Contempt	Grief	Resentment
Contentment	Guilt	Reverence
Delight	Happiness	Sadness
Depression	Hate	Serenity
Determination	Hope	Shame
Distrust	Impatience	Solemnity
Dislike	Inspiration	Surprise

[1] Davitz, Joel R. *The Language of Emotion*, Academic Press, New York, 1969, pp. 32-84.

APPENDIX D

The "Communication Stopper" Scripts

I. INTERRUPTING:

Person 1: I got a new dog! He's so cute. You know what he did?
Person 2: Linda got a new cat.
1: Oh, she did? When?
2: Last week.
1: Oh. Well, anyway, my new dog is just a puppy. He . . .
2: Linda's cat is full grown.
1: Oh. How come she didn't get a kitten?
2: I don't know. I saw her cat. It's black and white and it's real big. It's a smart cat too. It comes when you call it and it purrs all the time.
1: Oh. My puppy cried all night last night. He kept . . .
2: That's why I don't have a dog. I wouldn't like to have to put up with that.
1: Oh.

II. PROBING:

Person 1: Hey, I want to tell you something!
Person 2: What is it?
1: Well, remember my cousin . . . the one who stayed with me last summer?
2: Yes. Is his name Lewin?
1: Yeah. Lewin.
2: Is he your cousin on your mother's side or on your father's side?
1: My mother's side. Anyway, Lewin and I saw you and Jan the other night, and . . .
2: Where did you see us?
1: At the show.
2: What night?
1: I don't know. I guess it was Friday night.
2: What was playing?
1: Uh. Gee. I don't remember. It was . . . It was . . .
2: Did you like the part where the guy was stuck in the water?
1: Oh, yeah. That happened to me once.
2: It did? When?
1: Last year.
2: When last year?
1: During the summer. I guess it was last August.
2: Where?
1: In the river.
2: What river?
1: Hey, what is this?
2: What do you mean? How come you don't answer my questions?

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2: Where?
1: In the river.
2: What river?
1: Hey, what is this?
2: What do you mean? How come you don't answer my questions?

III. JUDGING:

Person 1: Will you please help me with this for a minute?

Person 2: Poor thing. You always need help.

1: I do? This is hard for me to lift. Could you please get the other end?

2: Yes, of course. I'll help. You aren't very strong.

1: Oh. I'm not? Well, anyway, let's lift this thing.

2: Well, you certainly do try hard. I've noticed what a good kid you are. You should keep it up.

1: Come on. Let's move this thing. I think we should put it right over here.

2: What a dumb place to put it. You don't seem that dumb.

1: Listen. If we don't put it over here the rain is going to get it all wet.

2: Oh. That's right. It's starting to rain! You know, you're smarter than I thought you were.

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IV. INTERPRETING:

Person 1: Hey, I'll meet you after school so we can walk home together.

Person 2: Thanks, but I'm going to stay after school for awhile. I have to talk to the teacher.

1: Uh oh! You're in trouble again.

2: No. That's not it. I just want to talk to the teacher about a map that I'm making at home.

1: Oh. You're trying to get in good with the teacher.

2: No. I just want to ask the teacher a question.

1: Oh. You want the teacher to do your work for you.

2: No. I just want a little help.

1: Sure. Sure. I know the real reason. You just don't want to walk home with me.

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V. CONFRONTING:

Person 1: Gee, I've got so much homework.
Person 2: So do I. But I'll bet I have more than you do.
1: You're always trying to outdo me.
2: I am?

1: Yes. If I'm good at something, you always have to be better. If I've got a lot of homework, you always have to have more!

2: I do? Say, would you please get the ball? It's in the closet.

1: Oh no it's not. I already looked in there. The closet is empty. You lost it.

2: It's not in there?
1: No. You lose everything. You can't keep track of anything. Find it!

2: Oh, here it is.
1: Well, that's better. You drive me crazy.

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VI. ADVISING:

Person 1: Say, you look like something is bothering you?

Person 2: Well, something is. I got a bad grade on the test.

1: Oh. Gee. That's too bad. If I were you I'd ask to have another chance.

2: You mean take the test again?
1: Yeah. And this time be sure to study. You have to study for a test if you want to get a good grade on it.

2: Yeah. I know that. The problem is that I did study.

1: Well, you probably didn't study long enough. Take my advice, you have to study at least two hours if you want to do well on any test. Furthermore, you have to study in a quiet place. And be sure to get someone to study with you.

2: I had my friend studying with me.
1: Well, that's not going to work. You have to have an adult help you study. If I were you I'd get my mom or dad. When I study I always get one of them to study with me.

2: Oh you do. Say, how did you do on the test?

1: Who me? Don't concern yourself with that. Just be sure *you* study right for the next test.

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VII. DOMINATING:

Person 1: Hi. I just got back from my trip. Our family went to the lake.

Person 2: We were at the lake a month ago, or so. We camped out. My dad taught me how to fish and I caught more fish than he did. He tried real hard, but I caught the most. I sure do like it up at the lake. It's a neat place, especially if you're camping out. I learned how to build a camp fire too. We did all our cooking out, you know. We roasted weiners and marshmallows and all kinds of stuff.

1: Oh. So did we.

2: Yeah. It's really great up at the lake. We stayed for two weeks. When it was time to come home I went and hid. They couldn't find me anywhere. When I finally came out, I just didn't want to go. We ate a whole bunch of fish that we caught ourselves. Boy, was that ever great! You know, I got a new fishing pole just before we left. It's a real good one. I caught a lot of fish with it. You know, there's a lot of trout up in that lake.

1: Yes I know. I caught some too.

2: There's bass up there too. I caught a few bass. They were big ones. My mom caught some too. Boy! Were they ever good! It's not so great cleaning them, though. You know, I cleaned every fish I caught with a little help from my dad. You know we saw some deer up there too. Well, I have to go now. Thanks for telling me about your trip.

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VIII. PUTTING DOWN

Person 1: Hi, blockhead!

Person 2: Hi.

1: Did you go to the game yesterday?

2: Yeah, I went but I didn't see you. Were you there?

1: What's the matter with you? Are you blind or something? I was there the whole time.

2: Oh. Well, I didn't see you at all.

1: What a dum dum. I scored two points. Didn't you notice that?

2: No. I guess I wasn't there then. I arrived late.

1: Johnny-come-lately, that's you. Do you ever get anywhere on time?

2: Sure, you dope, I got here on time today.

1: For once . . .

2: For more than once. Listen. You should talk. You were late yesterday, and the day before that!

1: No, sir. No, I wasn't.

2: Oh, yes you were.

1: Oh, no I wasn't, you nut!

2: Oh yes you were, you dingbat!

1: Stupid!

2: Idiot!

1: Bonehead!

2: Dope!

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